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Constantia: The Last Constantinian*

ABSTRACT

This article highlights the significant role played by Constantia, posthumous daughter of the emperor Constantius II, in late fourth century dynastic politics and ideology. Though Constantia has generally been neglected in modern studies of the period, close examination of the surviving sources reveals her pivotal position, even from her earliest years, as a coveted link between the Constantinian dynasty and new emperors seeking to establish themselves and their families in the turbulent years of the 360s, 370s and 380s AD. Through investigation of the source material relating to Constantia's short life, we gain further vital insight into the perennial importance to imperial politics of dynastic loyalty, and specifically loyalty to the Constantinian house, in the late fourth century, as well as emerging new ideas about the complexities of the marriages of imperial women.

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades the topic of imperial women in late antiquity has been a popular one in modern scholarship.[1] Nevertheless, Constantia, the posthumous daughter of Constantius II and later wife of the emperor

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Abbreviations used in this article:

AE	*L'Année Épigraphique*
AM	Ammianus Marcellinus
CIL	*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, ed. G. Reimerum, 36 vols (Berlin 1862-1893)
CTh	*Theodosiani libri xvi cum constitutionibus Sirmondianis,* Th. Mommsen, P. Meyer et al. (eds) (Berlin 1905). English translation: *Codex Theodosianus: The Theodosian Code and Novels and the Sirmondian Constitutions,* trans. C. Pharr (New York 1952)
ILS	*Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae*, H. Dessau (ed.) (Berlin 1892-1916)
LSA	*The Last Statues of Antiquity Database* http://laststatues.classics.ox.ac.uk/
PLRE	*The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*, 3 vols, A.H.M. Jones, J.R. Martindale, J.R. & J. Morris (eds.) (Cambridge 1971-1992)
RE	*Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*

[1] See e.g. the important studies of Holum (1982), Brubaker (1997), James (2001), Harries (2014), and most recently Busch (2015), Croke (2015), and Dirschlmayer (2015), and for recent studies of empresses in the Byzantine period: Garland (1999), and Herrin (2001) and (2013).

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Gratian, receives scant attention in scholarship on this period, while those works which do mention her usually relegate her to a passing reference in a footnote.[2] Modern scholars can hardly be blamed for their reticence: ancient sources also rarely accord her more than the briefest notice. Yet Constantia, born to Constantius II's third wife Faustina a few months after the emperor's death, was both her father's only child, and the only grandchild of Constantine I known to have lived beyond childhood. Born as the family itself declined, throughout her short life Constantia remained a coveted connection to the Constantinian era, as both the usurper Procopius and the Valentinian dynasty recognised. And although, even after her marriage to the young Augustus Gratian in 374, Constantia remains largely invisible in the ancient sources (much like other empresses of the house of Valentinian), as we shall see, the references made by the ruling dynasty to their new familial connection suggests that she played a much more important role in imperial propaganda than previously acknowledged. The information which does survive on her short life is significant for our understanding of the continued value of the Constantinian name in dynastic politics beyond the period of the family's rule. At the time of her birth in late 361 or early 362, the reign of Constantia's dynasty stretched back to the late third century, and the family's legacy would continue to be felt in many forms over the following decades and even centuries, through legislation, coin images, statuary, religious policies, and even in the acclamation of later emperors as 'new Constantines'.[3] This paper aims, therefore, to bring together for the first time all available evidence relating to Constantia's life, and to show her importance in the context of late fourth century imperial and dynastic politics. Constantia deserves more than a footnote.

1. Constantius II and the Search for an Heir

It is a surprising fact that, although there were many children born to the Constantinian family in the first half of the fourth century, by the 350s very few potential heirs remained. The purge of the family after the death of Constantine I in 337 had left the late emperor's three surviving sons (Constantine II, Constantius II and Constans), two daughters (Constantina and Helena), and three nephews (Gallus and Julian, the sons of Constantine's half-brother Julius Constantius, and Nepotianus, the son of Constantine's half-sister Eutropia).[4]

[2] See e.g. McEvoy (2013a) 64, 105. A notable exception is Lenski, who accords her more attention than any other modern scholar to date: Lenski (2002) esp. 98-104. Constantia does receive short entries in *PLRE* 1.221, and *RE* (Seeck [1900] 959). There is no full entry, however, for her on the *de imperatoribus romanis* website (www.roman-emperors.org).

[3] Considerable modern scholarship exists on this topic: see on the 'long shadow of Constantine' in this era particularly (Lenski [2002] 97-104), and more generally the chapters of Lenski (2006).

[4] For a detailed recent analysis of the purge of 337, see Burgess (2008). On the survivors: Constantine II – *PLRE* 1.223; Constantius II – *PLRE* 1.226; Constans – *PLRE* 1.220;

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Constantine I was remarkably short on grandchildren. A law preserved in the Theodosian Code and dated to 322 famously records the birth of a child to Crispus, the emperor's eldest son, who was executed in mysterious circumstances in 326, and his otherwise unknown wife Helena.[5] The fate of the child is unknown, and the lack of any further mention of them in other sources suggests the child died in infancy. Constantine I's second son, Constantine II, who survived his father to rule jointly with his younger brothers for only three years (337-340) is known to have been married, but not to have produced any children.[6] Constantine I's youngest son, Constans, though betrothed in childhood to Olympias, daughter of the long-serving praetorian prefect Ablabius, never married, and the betrothal was in all likelihood dissolved when Ablabius fell from power c. 337 shortly after Constantine I's death.[7] Constans died in the 350s, still only in his 20s, and without any known issue.[8]

It is Constantius II, therefore, the longest-reigning son of Constantine I (Augustus from 337 until his death in 361), to whom we must turn in the search for a direct heir. That this was an issue which concerned the emperor himself is suggested both by his three marriages, and also by the rumours preserved in a number of ancient sources. Constantius was first married in the 330s, as Eusebius reports, to his cousin, a daughter of Julius Constantius, whose name has not survived in the sources.[9] The date of her death is also unknown, and the union bore no children, but by 354 Constantius had married a second wife, Eusebia, from a prominent senatorial family.[10] Although, as Julian asserted, having won back his

Gallus – *PLRE* 1.224-225; Julian – *PLRE* 1.477-478; Nepotianus – *PLRE* 1.624. Unlike his cousins, who dwelt in or near Constantinople, Nepotianus lived in Rome. For Constantina see *PLRE* 1.222, and for Helena *PLRE* 1.409-410, and on their known children (none of whom apparently lived beyond infancy) see below.

5 *CTh* 9.38.1 (Oct 30, 322 – Rome). For sources on the life and death of Crispus, see *PLRE* 1.233. For recent modern analyses of the circumstances surrounding his death, see Harries (2012) 258-60, and Barnes (2011) 144-50.

6 Euseb. *Vit. Const.* 4.49 informs us of Constantine II's marriage at some point prior to 335, but not the identity of his bride.

7 For the betrothal of Constans and Olympias, see AM 20.11.3; for sources on Ablabius, see *PLRE* 1.3-4, and Harries (2012) 187-8. Olympias (*PLRE* 1.642) later married Arsaces III, king of Armenia.

8 On the general failure of the Roman elite to reproduce itself, see Hopkins (1983) esp. 134-49, and Scheidel (1999) 254-81.

9 Constantius' first marriage to a daughter of Julius Constantius is recorded by Euseb. *Vit. Const.* 4.49 (who does not state the bride's identity); Julian, *Ep. ad Athen.* 272D provides the information that Constantius' first wife was the sister of Gallus and Julian, as does Athanasius, *Hist. Ar.* 69.

10 The *PLRE* dates the marriage of Eusebia and Constantius to c. 354. For further sources on her life, see *PLRE* 1.300-301. Ammianus notes that Eusebia was the sister of ex-consuls, Eusebius and Hypatius, and records her favourable interventions on Julian's behalf with her husband Constantius (AM 21.6.4). Julian's panegyric in honour of Eusebia (*Oration* 3) was written c. 356/7; he also notes that she was the daughter of a consul (109A). On the representation of Eusebia in the oration, see Wieber (2010)

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empire, however, after the defeat of Magnentius in 353, Constantius sought to marry '. . . that he might beget sons to inherit his honour and power', Eusebia proved unable to conceive.[11] When Constantius raised Julian to the rank of Caesar in 355, he also gave his sister Helena in marriage to the new Caesar,[12] and the empress Eusebia's anxiety over her own lack of children, and fear that the Caesar Julian's wife might succeed where she had failed, is apparent from a number of sources. According to Ammianus, Helena's fertility led Eusebia to launch a nefarious plot in 357:

> Constantius' sister Helena, wife of Julian Caesar, had been brought to Rome under pretence of affection, but the reigning queen, Eusebia, was plotting against her; she herself had been childless all her life, and by her wiles she coaxed Helena to drink a rare potion, so that as often as she was with child she should have a miscarriage. For once before, in Gaul, when she had borne a baby boy, she lost it through this machination: a midwife had been bribed with a sum of money, and as soon as the child was born cut the umbilical cord more than was right, and so killed it; such great pains and so much thought were taken that this most valiant man might have no heir.[13]

Not only is Eusebia blamed here for inducing Helena to drink the dangerous potion, but she is also implicated in the reference to the bribed midwife attending the birth of Helena and Julian's earlier child.[14] And while Ammianus is only reporting rumours which may have had no basis

253-76, and on Eusebia's interventions with her husband on Julian's behalf, see Tougher (1998) 595-9.

[11] Julian, *Or.* 3. 109A-B: Εὐσεβία δέ, περὶ ἧς ὁ λόγος, παῖς μὲν ὑπάτου γέγονε, γαμετὴ δέ ἐστι βασιλέως ἀνδρείου, σώφρονος, συνετοῦ, δικαίου, χρηστοῦ καὶ πράου καὶ μεγαλοψύχου, ὃς ἐπειδὴ πατρῴαν οὖσαν αὐτῷ τὴν ἀρχὴν ἀνεκτήσατο, ἀφελόμενος τοῦ βίᾳ λαβόντος, γάμου τε ἐδεῖτο πρὸς παίδων γένεσιν, οἳ κληρονομήσουσι τῆς τιμῆς καὶ τῆς ἐξουσίας, ταύτην ἀξίαν ἔκρινε τῆς κοινωνίας, γεγονὼς ἤδη σχεδόν τι τῆς οἰκουμένης ἁπάσης κύριος. [trans. Wright]. Modern scholars echo this view: e.g. Holum (1982) 28: [Constantius married Eusebia] 'to procreate children who would inherit his rank and power'; Tougher (2000) 98: 'Eusebia, childless herself but presumably the repository for Constantius' desires for a successor of his own blood . . .'

[12] Julian and Helena (*PLRE* 1.409-410) were married at Milan (AM 15.8.18) in 355.

[13] AM 16.10.18-19: *inter haec Helenae sorori Constanti, Iuliani coniugi Caesaris, Romam affectionis specie ductae, regina tunc insidiabatur Eusebia, ipsa quoad vixerat sterilis, quaesitumque venenum bibere per fraudem illexit, ut quotienscumque concepisset, immaturum abiceret partum. nam et pridem in Galliis, cum marem genuisset infantem, hoc perdidit dolo, quod obstetrix corrupta mercede, mox natum, praesecto plus quam convenerat umbilico, nevavit; tanta tamque diligens opera navabatur, ne fortissimo viri soboles appareret.* [trans. Rolfe]. A line in Julian's *Ep. ad Ath.* 272D also suggests that his brother Gallus, who had been nominated as Caesar in 351 and wed to another sister of Constantius, Constantina, had fathered a daughter before his execution in 354, but nothing further is known of this child. It is, of course, worth bearing in mind that Ammianus favoured Julian and may therefore have wished to blacken the name not only of Constantius, but of Constantius' wife Eusebia.

[14] Tougher (2000) 96-7.

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in truth, their existence may testify to awareness of Eusebia's anxiety to produce an heir for Constantius. The birth of such an heir would indeed have avoided Constantius' need to name his cousins Gallus and later Julian as Caesars in the 350s, when Ammianus reports that the responsibility of governing the whole empire alone was weighing upon him.[15] In later years, when on the march against Constantius for control of the empire, Julian was to assert that the emperor blamed 'his unhappy state of childlessness' on his involvement in the murder of family members in 337.[16] A later source, Philostorgius, reports that in the late 350s Eusebia had been afflicted with a disease of the womb, whereupon Constantius had called upon a healer whom he had earlier exiled, one Theophilus the Indian, to come and cure his wife.[17] Yet no ministrations were able to assist the empress in her desperation to conceive, and she died in 360 or perhaps early 361.[18]

Constantius married his third wife Faustina in 361,[19] who fell pregnant soon after – but Constantius was never to witness the birth of his longed-for child. Among the frightening omens of death Constantius experienced (at least according to Ammianus) was a dream in which the ghost of his father, Constantine I, held out to Constantius a fair child, but when he took the infant and set it on his own lap, the ball Constantius held in his right hand fell loose and was thrown a great distance. Constantius is said to have believed the dream foretold a change in the state.[20] Ammianus makes no reference to the unborn child Constantius' wife carried at this point, yet the emperor's concern about the fate of the empire under either this infant or his cousin Julian are difficult to overlook as relevant to the nightmare.

While on the march west against his rebellious Caesar, Julian, Constantius fell ill with a fever and died at Mopsucrenai in November 361 at the age of 44.[21] He reportedly left instructions naming Julian as his heir, and gave commissions and legacies to those dear to him, presumably entrusting Julian also with the safety of Faustina and her unborn child.[22]

[15] AM 15.8.2. If a son had been born to Constantius in the 330s or even 340s, he would have been old enough to be named Caesar in the 350s and Constantius would not have needed to elevate his cousins.

[16] Julian, *Ep. ad Ath.* 270D-271A: Μετεμέλησε γὰρ αὐτῷ, φασί, καὶ ἐδήχθη δεινῶς, ἀπαιδίαν τε ἐντεῦθεν νομίζει δυστυχεῖν, τά τε ἐς τοὺς πολεμίους τοὺς Πέρσας οὐκ εὐτυχῶς πράττειν ἐκ τούτων ὑπολαμβάνει. [trans. Wright].

[17] Philostorgius, 4.7. Theophilus was, in fact, a bishop and wielded considerable influence during the reign of Constantius II. See Malosse (2011) 204, and Marasco (2011) 271-2. See also Seeck (1909) 1365-6 on Eusebia's gynaecological ailment.

[18] John Chrysostom, *In Ep. ad Philipp.* 15.5 (*PG,* LXII, 295), who appears to suggest Eusebia died in the course of seeking treatment for her gynaecological problems; also Seeck (1909) 1366, and Holum (1982) 28.

[19] AM 21.6.4. On Faustina, of whom very little is known, see *PLRE* 1.326.

[20] AM 16.14.1.

[21] AM 21.15.2.

[22] AM 21.15.2-3.

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Ammianus adds only that Constantius, '. . . left his wife with child, and the posthumous daughter to whom she afterwards gave birth was called by his name, and when she grew up was united in marriage with Gratianus.'[23] This daughter, Constantia, as a rare surviving link to the ruling house of Constantine following this period of familial murders and childless marriages, would go on to play a key role as a symbol of her dynasty over the following decades.

2. The Usurpation of Procopius

The 360s were a turbulent period in Roman imperial politics. Following the death of Constantius II, Julian, the last emperor of the house of Constantine, was to reign for only just over 18 months before his death in battle against the armies of Persia in June 363. The reign of his successor, Jovian, was even shorter, lasting a mere eight months before his mysterious death, apparently an accident caused by charcoal poisoning, on 17th February, 364.[24] Thereafter the empire was to find some measure of stability under the Valentinian dynasty. Valentinian I was elected emperor on 25th February, 364 after Jovian's death, and promptly raised his brother Valens as his co-Augustus, pre-empting any need for a further imperial election if Valentinian I died unexpectedly like his two predecessors.[25] Valentinian chose to concentrate his efforts on the western realm, dispatching his brother Valens to rule the east.

Constantia, the posthumous daughter of Constantius II, had outlived her dynasty's rule before she was even five years old. No source provides information as to her early life or even whereabouts in her first years – the context, however, for her next appearance in the records suggests that she and her mother were resident in Constantinople. In September 365 a usurper named Procopius was proclaimed Augustus in the city.[26] This Procopius asserted kinship with the late emperor Julian and through him to the house of Constantine, though his link to the Constantinians seems to have been a tie of marriage rather than blood – the most likely connection being that Procopius was related to Julian's mother Basilina, who was not herself a blood relative of the family of Constantine.[27] Nevertheless, Procopius asserted that he belonged to 'the loftiest royal line', in contrast with the 'base Pannonian' now occupying the eastern throne, and that in claiming the throne he aimed

[23] AM 21.15.5-6: *uxorem autem praegnantem reliquit, unde edita postuma eiusque nomine appellata, cum adolevisset, matrimonii iure copulata est Gratiano.* [trans. Rolfe].

[24] For sources on the life and reign of Jovian generally, see *PLRE* 1. 461. The main source for Jovian is AM 25.5-10, on which see den Boeft et al. (2005).

[25] On Valentinian I, see *PLRE* 1.933-934, and for Valens *PLRE* 1.930-931.

[26] On Procopius, see *PLRE* 1.742-743, and for the most detailed analysis of his usurpation, see Lenski (2002) 68-115; see also Austin (1972) 187-94.

[27] Austin (1972) 189. See further Lenski (2002) 69. For Basilina, see *PLRE* 1.148.

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not 'to seize what belongs to another, but to restore himself to the possession of his ancestral majesty.'[28]

During Julian's Persian campaign Procopius had been given command of a detachment of troops as a *comes*, and upon his cousin's death he had accompanied Julian's body to Tarsus for burial.[29] Under Jovian, Procopius had apparently retired to family estates in Cappadocia, but for unexplained reasons under Valens he had gone into hiding, emerging in Constantinople to be proclaimed Augustus at the baths of Anastasia – a Constantinian civic benefaction no doubt chosen with the intent of emphasising Procopius' proclaimed dynastic claim to the throne.[30] Indeed, as scholars have observed it is likely Procopius' elevation at Constantinople was also calculated to capitalise on local loyalties to the family.[31] Long-term imperial residence in Constantinople was unusual during the 360s, and Procopius' usurpation there was doubtless intended to appeal to local elites, many of whom may have owed their status in Constantine's new imperial city to the former ruling dynasty.[32] Procopius' assertions of legitimacy, which he based in part also on the claim that his cousin Julian had presented him with a purple cloak at the outset of the Persian campaign with instructions to claim the throne in the event of his death,[33] were not helped by the disorganised nature of his acclamation as reported in the sources, though these accounts are all tainted by knowledge of Procopius' ultimate failure.[34] According to Ammianus (and in

[28] AM 26.7.16: *'en', inquit 'cana Romanorum exercituum fides et religionibus firmis iuramenta constricta! placet, fortissimo viri, pro ignotis tot suorum consurrexisse mucrones, utque Pannonius degener, labefactans cuncta et proterens, imperio quod ne votis quidem concipere ausus est umquam potiatur, ingemiscere nos vestris nostrisque vulneribus! quin potius sequimini culminis summi prosapiam, non ut rapiat aliena, sed in integrum maiestatis avitae restituatur, arma iustissima commoventem.'* [trans. Rolfe]. On the tone of indignation of Procopius' speech regarding the Pannonian emperors claiming the throne, see den Boeft et al. (2008) 208-9. See also Themistius, *Or.* 7.90a, 92b on Procopius (referred to as the tyrant) and his claims of kinship to the house of Constantine.

[29] AM 23.3.5; 25.9.12-13.

[30] AM 26.6.14; Matthews (1989) 191; Vanderspoel (1995) 161; Heather and Moncur (2001) 146. For Procopius' estates in Cappadocia, and going into hiding after the accessions of Valentinian I and Valens, see Zosimus, 4.4.2-3 and 4.5.1-4, with comments by Paschoud (1979) 340-1, n. 114. The baths of Anastasia were named for Constantine's half-sister (on whom see *PLRE* 1.58).

[31] Lenski (2002) 100.

[32] Croke (2010) 241. Only a few years earlier Julian had entered the city to great acclaim following the death of Constantius (AM 22.2.4), a memory Procopius and his supporters were likely keen to exploit. On the 'new men' of Constantinople in the fourth century, see Heather (1994) esp. 14-18.

[33] AM 23.3.2; Zos. 4.4.2-3; Philostorgius, 9.5. As Lenski (2002) 69-70 observes, Zosimus records this as established fact, but both Ammianus and Philostorgius are more cautious in crediting it; cf. Demandt (1998) 91.

[34] As both Blockley (1975) 58 and Heather (1999) 107 have pointed out, Ammianus' usurpers always have trouble with their purple garments. See also Austin (1972) 187-8.

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spite of the rumour of Julian's gift of such a garment), no purple robe could be found for Procopius, so the usurper donned a gold tunic and waived a piece of purple cloth in his hand.[35]

Procopius was clearly in need of a means of bolstering his claim, and found it in the person of the five-year old princess Constantia and her mother Faustina. According to Ammianus, in Procopius' attempt to gain the support of the imperial armies:

> There was found, besides, a very favourable means of winning them over, namely, that Procopius took in his arms the little daughter of Constantius, whose memory they honoured, and carried her about, claiming kinship with Julian, the former emperor. And he gained another timely advantage in that Faustina, the girl's mother, happened to be present when he had received some insignia forming a part of the imperial adornment.[36]

The persuasiveness of the child Constantia's presence in winning over supporters to Procopius' cause is strong testament to military loyalty to the memory of the Constantinian dynasty, cleverly exploited by Procopius.[37] It was essential to Procopius' cause to maintain control of Constantia and her mother, and to prevent them falling into the hands of the Valentinians and thereby depriving the usurper of his most persuasive source of legitimacy. And indeed, the usurper's employment of the child Constantia in his cause did not stop at carrying her about: Procopius allegedly kept Faustina and her daughter constantly with him, even on the battlefield. According to Ammianus' account, when the time came for the forces of Valens to attack those of Procopius, there was a noticeable reluctance on the part of Valens' army:

> . . . he was met with a general and obstinate resistance, for this reason in particular – that his enemy (as has been mentioned) both on the march and when they were almost in battle array, carried about with him in a litter the little daughter of Constantius and her mother Faustina; and thereby had inflamed the passions of the soldiers to fight more bravely in defence of the imperial stock, with which he claimed that he himself was connected.[38]

[35] AM 26.6.15-16. As Matthews (1989) 193-4 observes, the description Ammianus offers of the accession is 'a ridiculous piece of burlesque'. See further den Boeft et al. (2008) 159 ff.

[36] Trans. Rolfe: AM 26.7.10: *inventa est enim occasio ad illiciendos eos perquam opportune, quod Constanti filiam parvulam, cuius recordation colebatur, sinu ipse circumferens necessitudinem praetendebat eiusdem. adeptusque est aliud tempori congruum, quod Faustina matre puellae, casu praesente, quaedam acceperat habitus insignia principalis.*

[37] Lenski (2002) 98. Also Austin (1972) 189-90; Matthews (1989) 199; Vanderspoel (1995) 161; Szidat (2010) 259.

[38] Trans. Rolfe: AM 26.9.3: *cui pertinaci conspiratione multorum, hac maxima consideratione resistebatur, quod hostis eius (ut ante relatum est), Constanti filiam parvulam, cum matre Faustina, et in agminibus et cum prope in acie starent, lectica circumferens*

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As Lenski observes, Procopius paraded the young Constantia and her mother 'as living emblems of his dynastic claim', to persuade his followers that they were fighting on behalf of the rightful imperial house.[39] It is worth bearing in mind that these events occurred only five years after the death of Constantius, and many at Constantinople and in the army particularly would clearly remember the rule of the Constantinian dynasty.

Procopius' flaunting of these 'living emblems' certainly did meet with some notable successes, both in the form of support from Roman generals and from troops who had previously served under Constantinian emperors. According to Ammianus, certain commanders who had served under Constantius II joined the usurpation, such as the *magistri militum* Gomoarius and Agilo.[40] Yet others, such as Arbitio, remained loyal to Valens.[41] The willingness of Gothic federate troops to involve themselves in the conflict on Procopius' side is particularly noteworthy. Eunapius reports upon the capture of these troops (whom he calls 'Scythians') by Valens when they were en route to join Procopius.[42] Apparently the Gothic king, demanding the release of his men, protested that,

> . . . he had sent his men to the emperor under the terms of the treaty, to which Valens replied that neither was Procopius emperor nor was there a treaty between him and the Scythians.[43]

There may have been various reasons for the Goths to involve themselves in a Roman civil war, but their avowed motive is of great significance here – that they were persuaded of Procopius' ties of kinship with the house of Constantine, with whom they had a treaty dating back to 332.[44] Procopius' propaganda machine, the strongest aspect of which was his

secum, ut pro imperiali germine cui se quoque iunctum addebat, pugnarent audentius, iras militum accenderat. See also Matthews (1989) 199.

[39] Lenski (2002) 98. Though involvement of young children in major occasions was not without its risks: the celebrations for the consulship of the infant son of Jovian, Varronianus, had been ruined by the latter's screams and refusal to sit in the curule chair, and came to be seen as a bad omen for Jovian's reign: AM 25.10.11. See further Heather (1999) 107.

[40] AM 26.7.4, 26.9.6-7; Zos. 4.8.2-3. See comments in Paschoud (1979) 347-9, nn. 121 and 122; also Blockley (1975) 56, 60; Austin (1972) 191; Lenski (2002) 99; Vanderspoel (1995) 163.

[41] AM 26.8.13, and further on those generals who did or did not support Procopius, den Boeft et al. (2008) 234-6. The confiscation of some of Arbitio's property by Procopius' forces apparently contributed to his willingness to aid Valens against the usurper. See further Austin (1972) 191; Lenski (2002) 100-1.

[42] Eunap. frag. 37 Blockley. Also AM 26.10.3; Zos. 4.7.1-2, with comments in Paschoud (1979) 345-6, n. 119.

[43] Eunap. frag 37 (trans. Blockley): ὁ μὲν γὰρ ἔφασκε βασιλεῖ δεδωκέναι κατὰ συμμαχίαν καὶ ὅρκους· ὁ δὲ ἀπέφασκε βασιλέα μὴ τυγχάνειν καὶ αὐτὸν οὐκ ὀμωμοκέναι. Similarly AM 27.5.1.

[44] Lenski (2002) 99; Austin (1972) 190-1; Matthews (1989) 196; Demandt (1998) 91-2.

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ability to display in his camp little Constantia, the last true Constantinian, was clearly doing its job well.[45]

Although Procopius' usurpation survived for only eight months before his support disintegrated and the would-be emperor was executed, it was a dangerous enough period for Eunapius to declare that Valens had been only a little way from losing his throne.[46] Procopius' use of Faustina and Constantia throughout his rebellion, as Austin writes, as 'virtual hostages' was key to his success in winning supporters to his cause and convincing them of the veracity of his claims of kinship to the Constantinian line.[47] Constantia and her mother were presumably pardoned by Valens, seen as unwilling participants in his usurpation, but their involvement must have served as a serious warning to the new ruling dynasty of the dangers of letting Constantius II's daughter fall into the wrong hands.[48]

3. The Marriage of Constantia and Gratian

After the fall of Procopius, nothing is heard of Constantia for eight years, and by the time she re-emerges in the sources at the age of c. 13 years, her mother has vanished from the story, presumably due to her death. It is once again from Ammianus that we gain a glimpse of Constantia. When writing of Constantius II's death, the historian noted that the posthumous daughter born to the late emperor would in time be married to the emperor Gratian.[49] In 374 that time had come. Gratian was the eldest son of the western emperor Valentinian I, in 367 at the age of 8 raised to the rank of Augustus to rule alongside his father and his uncle Valens, and by 374 the young emperor was 15 years old. [50]

Valentinian I and his son maintained their principal residence at Trier at this time, and Constantia's marriage presumably took place there. Ammianus reports on an alarming moment on the princess' journey (presumably from Constantinople) to the western court:

> . . . the daughter of Constantius, when being conducted to marry Gratianus, was very nearly captured while she was taking food in a public

[45] As Lenski points out, Procopius' coinage also consciously evoked Constantinian memories, in its portrayal of Procopius with a beard (similarly to Julian's coinage) but the use of the labarum as well to suggest himself as heir both to the philospher-king Julian and the Christian Constantius (Lenski [2002] 99-100; also Austin [1972] 193).

[46] Eunap. frag. 34.4 Blockley. Ammianus too, reports that Valens considered abdication (AM 26.7.13). See further on the disintegration of Procopius' support, Vanderspoel (1995) 161-2, and for a detailed account of the course of the rebellion and the forces Procopius was able to put together against Valens, Lenski (2002) 74-84.

[47] Austin (1972) 191.

[48] Procopius' other supporters were not so fortunate. Ammianus spends some time explaining the punishments and executions ordered against them by Valens: AM 26.10; and more briefly, Zos. 4.8.4-5. See further Lenski (2002) 104-15.

[49] AM 21.15.5-6.

[50] On the elevation of Gratian as Augustus, see McEvoy (2013a) 49-53.

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> villa called Pristensis, but (by the favour of the propitious godhead) Messalla, the governor of the province, was at hand and placed her in a state carriage and took her in all haste back to Sirmium, twenty-six miles away.[51]

The dedication of a bath complex in Calabria in June of 374 by both western emperors (Valentinian I and Gratian) and which interestingly also mentions their queens (*reginae*) confirms that the marriage had occurred by this point, but little else survives to mark the event.[52] As soon as she reached a suitable age, therefore, Constantia and Gratian were joined in marriage, a plan probably laid many years before. Although commentators such as Themistius had repeatedly emphasised the achievement of the new Valentinian dynasty in reaching the throne through merit alone and not blood, at the same time denigrating the blood-letting of the Constantinians,[53] the chance to forge a blood tie with the house of Constantine was irresistible, while Constantia's marriage to any other high-ranking individual would have been far too great a risk to the new dynasty to be permitted. That the Valentinians were actively courting the Constantinian legacy through marriage is also strongly suggested by the fact that Gratian's father, Valentinian I, had put aside his first wife (Gratian's mother) soon after his accession in order to marry Justina, a woman also apparently possessed of Constantinian connections.[54]

When Valentinian I departed from Trier to campaign on the Danube later the same year, he left Gratian and Constantia behind at Trier, perhaps to emphasise Gratian's newfound adulthood and responsibility.[55] Constantia's marriage unfortunately does not, however, make her much more visible in the extant sources. Themistius makes a reference to the marriage in his *Oration* 13, delivered in 376 at Rome, when he declares

[51] Trans. Rolfe: AM 29.6.7: *evenisset profecto tunc inexpiabile scelus, numerandum inter probosas rei Romanae iacturas; paulo enim afuit, quin filia caperetur Constanti, cibum sumens in publica villa, quam appellant Pristensem, cum duceretur Gratiano nuptura, ni favore propitii numinis, praesens Messalla, provinciae rector, eam iudiciali carpento impositam, ad Sirmium vicensimo sexto lapide disparatam, cursu reduxisset effuso.* As den Boeft et al. (2013) 233-5 note, Messalla was governor of Pannonia Secunda, and this incident took place somewhere on the route between Singidunum, Sirmium, Cibalae and Mursa, the path Constantia's journey between her likely home in Constantinople and Gratian's court at Trier would have taken.

[52] *AE* 1913, 227: *Imperator Caesar Flavius Valentinianus Pius Felix Victor ac Triumfator Semper Augustus et Flavius Valens Pius Felix Victor ac Triumfator Semper Augustus et Flavius Gratianus Pius Felix Victor ac Triumfator Semper Augustus Reginis Suis . . .* Presumably the complex was simply paid for by the emperors rather than dedicated in person, since we have no other evidence which suggests they travelled so far south in Italy at this time.

[53] See e.g. Them. *Or.* 6.74b-c; and further Lenski (2002) 101.

[54] Lenski (2002) 103; Woods (2004) 325-7; McEvoy (2013a) 105; Potter (2004) 543: Szidat (2010) 200.

[55] AM 30.10.1; Zos. 4.19.1. See further Lenski (2002) 102-3.

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that, through mingling his blood with that of the Constantinians, Gratian has ensured the security of Constantinople (and presumably by extension, the empire) – yet even here Constantia is not referred to by name.[56] As Harries has observed of the imperial women of this period generally, as important as they were as 'conduits of imperial dynastic continuity', they tend only to be mentioned in our sources as daughters, wives or mothers of emperors.[57] The fact that but a few mentions of Constantia survive need not mean she was unimportant, merely that her significance as far as the sources were concerned was focused on her dynastic relationships.

Like her fellow Valentinian empresses, Constantia was never made an Augusta,[58] and the marriage is not known to have produced any children.[59] Yet Gratian's marriage to Constantia brought with it to the Valentinians a family connection to the house of Constantine which was publicly highlighted, particularly in the *gratiarum actio* of Ausonius, western consul for 379. Ausonius had been Gratian's childhood tutor. At the time of the oration's composition and delivery at Trier, Gratian was in fact far from the city, attempting to cope with the immense crisis facing the Roman empire following the catastrophic defeat of the Roman armies at Hadrianople and the death of the emperor Valens.[60] Ausonius therefore

[56] Them. *Or.* 13.167c. See further on the oration, Vanderspoel (1995) 180-4. The reference to the security of Constantinople may allude to Procopius' usurpation there some ten years earlier.

[57] As Harries (2012) 255-7 observes, particularly of Tetrarchic and Constantinian imperial women.

[58] In fact, there had not been an Augusta since the death of Helena in c. 330. None of Constantius' wives had been raised to this rank, and the next appearance of it would be with Flaccilla, the wife of Theodosius I, after the elevation of her eldest son Arcadius as Augustus in 383 (see Holum [1982] 28-9). The failure to name any Valentinian empress as Augusta, therefore, may not be a particularly significant sign of the insecurity of the dynasty (contra Potter [2004] 542). Little reference of any sort is made to Valentinian empresses in our sources, and the prominence of Justina, the second wife of Valentinian I, in her alleged conflict with Ambrose over the churches of Milan only arises well after the death of her husband and during the minority rule of her son Valentinian II – and even she was never granted the title of Augusta. See McLynn (1994) 157-219.

[59] The *PLRE* entry for Gratian (1.401-402) mistakenly records that Gratian and Constantia had a son who predeceased his father, citing three sources, none of which support this claim: Augus. *Civ. Dei*, 5.25 (which refers to Gratian's younger brother Valentinian II), Theodoret, *HE* 5.12 (which specifically states that Gratian had no sons), and Symmachus, *Rel.* 3.19, who refers simply to the heirs of Valentinian I. The entry for Constantia herself (*PLRE* 1. 221) in contrast makes no mention of any children from the marriage. The *RE* entry for Constantia also mistakenly records the birth of a son to her, citing Augustine. See further on this point McEvoy (2013a) 64, n. 80. It is, of course, possible that Gratian and Constantia did have a child or children who predeceased them, yet no source records such an event.

[60] Ausonius acknowledges Gratian's preoccupation with military matters at this point, referring to swords being drawn in Illyricum even as Gratian distributes robes of civil dignities in Gaul, and the emperor dealing with the question of Ausonius' gown even as he prepares for battle (Auson. *Grat. Act*. 11).

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addresses his emperor *in absentia*, describing the remarkable consular robe Gratian sent to him and the apparent care Gratian took over its design:

> You are not content that the officials of your largess should perform their ordinary duties: you choose one robe out of many with your own hands, and having chosen it, follow up your gift with words of compliment. You say: *I have sent you a palm-broidered robe in which is worked a figure of the sainted Constantius, my ancestor.* Happy am I that such pains should be bestowed upon my vestments! . . . For the light which flashes from this single garment bespeaks two imperial personages: Constantius is embroidered in the actual fabric of the robe; but in the complimentary nature of the gift, I feel the presence of Gratian.[61]

For Gratian, therefore, his late father-in-law has become *parens noster*, and the consular gown of Ausonius a means of advertising this illustrious connection.[62] Such a connection was only possible because of Gratian's marriage to Constantia, and Ausonius' senatorial audience at Trier would have been so well aware of the link to Constantius as to make any explanation of it unnecessary.

It is striking, however, that in the course of this fulsome oration, amidst all of its praise for the young emperor, Ausonius never once mentions Constantia, the means by which Gratian acquired this illustrious parent.[63] By 379 the couple had been married for more than four years. Constantia's whereabouts during Gratian's military campaigns

[61] Trans. Evelyn White: Auson. *Grat. Act*. 11: *nec satis habis, ut largitionum ministri ex more fugantur: eligis ipse de multis et, cum elegeris, munera tua verborum honore prosequeris.* Palmatum*, inquis,* tibi misi, in qua divus Constantius parens noster intextus est. *me beatum, cuius insignibus talis cura praestatur! haec plane, haec est picta, ut dicitur, vestis, non magis auro suo quam tuis verbis. sed multo plura sunt in eius ornatu, quae per te instructus intellego. geminum quippe in uno habitu radiat nomen Augusti. Constantius in argumento vestis intexitur, Gratianus in muneris honore sentitur.* See further Green (1991) 548; McEvoy (2013a) 105; Lenski (2002) 103.

[62] A law issued by Valens in October 377 also referred to Constantius II and Constantine as 'our ancestors': *nihil enim aliud praecipe volumus, quam quod evangeliorum et apostolorum fides et tradition incorrupta servavit, sicut lege divali parentum nostrorum Constantini Constanti Valentiniani decreta sunt.* (*CTh* 16.6.2). This text (and a similar reference in a church council of 378) has been seen as a further claim by the Valentinian house of relationship to the Constantinians (see Lenski [2002] 103), yet may in itself be simply an honorific formula for referring to previous emperors to whom no blood relationship is necessarily claimed (see e.g. *CJ* 5.24.1, *CJ* 11.59.1, *CTh* 13.10.2 for laws issued by other emperors, using this honorific title without any obvious claim to blood relationship). See similarly on use of *parentes nostri* in Tetrarchic legislation, often referring to praetorian prefects: Corcoran (2007) 239. For a case of the use of the term in a Constantinian inscription referring to a praetorian prefect which may however denote a special relationship between the prefect and the emperor, see Swift and Oliver (1962) 247-264.

[63] Though, as noted above, not out of keeping with the general attitude of imperial propaganda of this period towards imperial women. Accidents of survival may play a role here too: very few of those panegyrics composed in this period are now extant, which may also cloud our view.

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are unknown, although it would be surprising if she was not present in Trier, still her husband's main court, in January 379. Yet not a word of her do we hear, nor of any hopes expressed for an heir to Gratian's empire.[64] Ausonius commits himself only to comments on the seemliness and moderation of Gratian's private life,[65] asserting that: 'The altar of Vesta is not more hallowed than the privacy of your bedchamber, the couch of a priest is not more pure, the bed of a prophet not more chaste,'[66] praise which does not even betray Gratian's married state to the audience (who presumably were well aware of it, nonetheless). Ausonius' description of an embroidered image on his consular gown of the imperial father Constantia had never known is the most extensive and important reference we have to the value of this alliance to the Valentinians, and to Constantia's role as western Roman empress.[67]

4. The Burial of Constantia in the Church of the Holy Apostles

Our next and final notice of Constantia in the sources comes in the context of her death and more particularly her burial, the circumstances of which once again demonstrated her dynastic importance and connection with the imperial past of Constantinople. Constantia must have died in early 383, since her husband Gratian, who was killed in August of the same year, had

[64] The later panegyrics and poems of Claudian on the emperor Honorius and his court would repeatedly refer to a hoped-for heir to the empire, though no such child was ever born: see for example: Claudian, *Nupt.* 335-341; also *Stil.* 2.346-61.

[65] Auson. *Grat. Act*. 14.

[66] Trans. Evelyn White: Auson. *Grat. Act*. 14: *operto conclavis tui non sanctior ara Vestalis, non pontificis cubile castius nec pulvinar flaminis tam pudicum.* Green finds the phrasing here somewhat odd and inept in referring to an emperor: (1991) 550. The *pudicitia* ('chastity') of an emperor was at this point an unusual virtue to praise (for background, see Noreña [2007] 296-317) yet would become more common under Christian emperors, and is perhaps to be associated with the change in virtues chosen to praise especially youthful emperors in the late fourth and fifth centuries: see McEvoy (2010) 166. The young Valentinian II (Augustus 375-392) was also praised in his funeral oration by Ambrose of Milan for his inviolable chastity: Ambrose, *De ob. Val.* 17. In terms of Ausonius' praise for Gratian in this context, it may also be an excuse for the couple's failure to produce an heir to date.

[67] No statue images of Constantia survive either, although a fragmentary inscription on a statue base in Sagalassos may have honoured her (LSA 2531, ed. Gehn), and a literary record survives of silver statues of Gratian and Constantia at an unspecified location in Rome (LSA 2707, ed. Gehn) from the *Parastaseis* 50 (and see also on the possible erection of silver statues to Gratian and Constantia, Vanderspoel [1995] 180). On a possible visit of Gratian to Rome shortly after his marriage, see Barnes (1975), esp. 328-30. On the lack of imperial statuary in general in the western provinces after the mid-fourth century, see Davenport (2014) 58-9. Since she was never raised to the rank of Augusta, no coin images were made of Gratian's empress (similarly the wives of Constantius and Julian).

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time to marry again after Constantia's death,[68] while the *Chronicon Paschale* notes that in 383,

> . . . the corpse of Constantia, the daughter of Constantine [sic] Augustus, arrived in Constantinople… and was laid to rest in the month Apellaeus, on Kalends of December [1 Dec].[69]

Constantia was thus aged in her early 20s at the time of her death. By the time of her interment in late 383, a number of emperors and members of the imperial family had been buried in the Holy Apostles complex at Constantinople, beginning with Constantine I in 337.[70] Upon the death of Eusebia, Constantius II's second wife, in 360, she was probably also buried in the imperial mausoleum, presumably only the second such imperial burial to take place there.[71] When Constantius II died shortly afterwards, Ammianus informs us that:

> When the corpse of the deceased emperor had been washed and placed in a coffin, Jovianus, who was at that time still an officer in the bodyguard, was ordered to escort it with regal pomp to Constantinople, to be interred beside his kinsfolk.[72]

Constantius' successor Julian, already in Constantinople, went out to meet the funeral procession without his diadem, and led it to the

[68] His widow Laeta is recorded as living at Rome many years later (Zos. 5.39.4); see comments by Paschoud (1986) 269-70, n. 91.

[69] Trans Whitby and Whitby: *Chronicon paschale.* s.a. 383: Καὶ αὐτῷ τῷ ἔτει εἰσῆλθεν τὸ σκήνωμα Κωνσταντίας τῆς θυγατρὸς Κωνσταντίνου Αὐγούστου ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει μηνὶ γορπιαίῳ πρὸ μιᾶς καλανδῶν σεπτεμβρίων, καὶ κατετέθη μηνὶ ἀπελλαίῳ καλανδαῖς δεκεμβρίαις. Also *Consularia Constantinopolitana* 383.2; Grierson (1962) 6; Johnson (1991) 505. No explanation is given in the sources for the delay of 3-4 months between the arrival of Constantia's body in the city and her burial.

[70] See in general on the Church of the Holy Apostles, Dagron (1974) 401-9 and more recently Johnson (2009) 119-29. The terms 'Holy Apostles' and 'Apostoleion' are both used here to indicate the same complex – in line with recent scholarship which tends to use them interchangeably – e.g. Johnson (2009) 119. According to Procopius, Constantine had intended the mausoleum to hold tombs for future emperors and their consorts as well as his own family (Procop. *Aed.* 1.4.19). The phases of construction of the mausoleum/church complex remain much debated: see Mango (1990) and more recently Burgess (2003) 28-32 and Johnson (2009) 119-29. According to Julian, Constantius had adorned his father's tomb in the 350s (Julian, *Or.* 1.16), while a number of sources attest to the translation of the relics of the apostles Andrew, Luke and Timothy to the church around the same time (see C. Mango [1990] 51-61, esp. 59-60, and further Johnson [2009] 120).

[71] Leo Grammaticus, 91.15-17 (on problems with this text, however, see below n. 77); Grierson (1962) 40; Johnson (2009) 121. None of Constantine's sons other than Constantius II were buried at Constantinople.

[72] Trans. Rolfe: AM 21.16.20: *Pollinctum igitur corpus defuncti, conditumque in loculis, Iovianus etiam tum protector domesticus, cum regia prosequi pompa, Constantinopolim usque iussus est, prope necessitudines eius humandum.*

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Holy Apostles where the late emperor was buried alongside his father Constantine I.[73]

Though Julian himself was originally buried at Tarsus following his death on his Persian campaign in 363,[74] in spite of his apostasy he was later reinterred also in the Apostoleion, probably during the reign of Theodosius I, who showed a particular interest in developing the Holy Apostles as the imperial mausoleum of the east.[75] Jovian too was laid to rest in the Holy Apostles after his death, perhaps in a stoa to the north of the church.[76] All of these imperial burials had involved emperors who had died within reasonable distance of Constantinople: the burial of Valentinian I in the Apostoleion however, is a more remarkable development. Valentinian had died in 375 following an apoplectic fit and fatal haemorrhage at Brigetio on the Danube frontier, far from Constantinople. Yet according to Ammianus:

> After the last invocation of the emperor his body was prepared for burial, in order to be sent to Constantinople and interred among the remains of the deified rulers.[77]

There seems to have been some delay over the final deposition of Valentinian I's body in the Holy Apostles, since it is recorded that the emperor's body arrived in the city in 376, yet his burial did not occur until 382.[78] This delay is

[73] Gregory of Nazianzus, *Or.* 5.16-17; See further Kelly (2003) 590. Grierson (1962) 40 alleges that Faustina was buried with Constantius but seems to have confused her with Eusebia.

[74] He was attended to his burial by Procopius, the later usurper: AM 25.9.12-13 and comments in den Boeft et al. (2005) 303-304; Kelly (2003) 590-591. Jovian, Valentinian I and Valens all took care to show respect to Julian's burial site: for Jovian at Julian's tomb, see AM 25.10.4; Socrates 3.26.1-2 and for Valens and Valentinian: Libanius, *Or.* 24.10. See further Lenski (2002) 98.

[75] The precise date of the transfer of Julian's body is unknown, recorded in a short comment from Zonaras xiii.13, 2, on which see Downey (1959) 46. And on the likely involvement of Theodosius I in the transfer, see Grierson (1962) 40 and more recently Croke (2010) 253. Johnson suggests that the tomb of Julian at Constantinople was located in the north stoa, whose only other known burial is that of Jovian: Johnson (2008) 259-260. The late account of Leo Grammaticus, however, records that the body of Helena, Julian's wife, was transferred to Constantinople for reburial in a circular sarcophagus together with her husband during the patriarchate of Eudoxius (360-370AD), in which case Julian's reinterment in the Apostoleion would have occurred well before Theodosius I's accession: Leo Grammaticus, 93.23-94.3. Leo is however a problematic source (see Haldon and Brubaker (2001) 173-176) whose account represents an alternative and redacted version of Symeon the Logothete, whose record refers to Eusebia at 89.4. On both of these texts see Wahlgren (2001) 251-262 and most recently Wahlgren (2006).

[76] AM 26.1.3; on the location of Jovian's tomb, see Downey (1959) 46 and Grierson (1962) 25.

[77] AM 30.10.1 (trans. Rolfe): *Post conclamata imperatoris suprema, corpusque curatum ad sepulturam, ut missum Constantinopolim inter divorum reliquias humaretur…*

[78] According to the *Consularia Constantinopolitana* the body arrived in December 376, but burial occurred in February 382 - see *Cons.Const.* a. 376; also Marcellinus comes s.a. 382.1. Johnson also suggests that Valentinian I's first wife, Marina, the mother of

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perhaps best explained as a transfer of his sarcophagus from one part of the mausoleum complex to another, rather than a first burial in 382, seven years after his death.[79]

By the time of the death of Constantia in 382 and the transport of her body for burial in Constantinople (presumably from Trier or Milan), therefore, a tradition was already developing of the Apostoleion as the extra-dynastic imperial mausoleum for the whole of the Roman empire. It was not the only possible choice of course – the sisters of Constantius II, Constantina (wife of the Caesar Gallus) and Helena (wife of the Caesar Julian), had both been buried at Rome, as had their grandmother, the Augusta Helena.[80] Other options were available therefore, yet the burial of this last member of the Constantinian family took place in the mausoleum created by her grandfather, where both he and her father had been laid to rest, and in the city moreover where she probably passed her childhood.[81] Constantia's burial marks the last known transfer from west to east of the body of a member of the *western* imperial family for interment in the Holy Apostles.[82] The body of her husband Gratian, held for some years after his death in 383 in the possession of the usurper Magnus Maximus, was probably eventually laid to rest in Milan, as was the body of Gratian's younger half-brother the emperor Valentinian II after his death in 392.[83] Thereafter the creation of a new imperial mausoleum attached to

Gratian, was later buried with him at Constantinople, (citing *Chronicon Altinate*, ed. Cessi, 105), though this is less secure: Johnson (1991) 502. See further on Valentinian's burial: Downey (1959) 46-47; Grierson (1962) 42. Grierson suggests the burial was delayed because no suitable sarcophagus was ready, which is also a possibility (p. 25).

79 Johnson (2009) 121.

80 Both sisters Constantina and Helena were buried in the mausoleum now known as that of Constantina, on the Via Nomentana: see AM 21.1.5, with den Boeft et al. (1991) 8-9 and further on Constantina's role as patron in Rome and her mausoleum, Harries (2014) 209-212; Johnson (2009) 139-156. On the later report of the body of Julian's wife Helena being transferred from Rome to Constantinople, see above n. 76 and also Kelly (2003) 591; Croke (2010) 253. For the burial of the Augusta Helena, mother of Constantius I, at Rome, see Drijvers (2011) 20-21; Johnson (1992) 145-150; Johnson (2009) 110-118. Reports exist that her body too was later transferred to Constantinople, see e.g. Grierson (1962) 39-40. As Grierson notes, it was not until the 370s that the "family" aspect of the mausoleum at Constantinople began to be promoted (pp. 24-25).

81 Grierson (1962) 25 suggests that the fact she was buried three months after the arrival of her body indicates that a suitable sarcophagus was already available, perhaps even that which Valens might have prepared for himself which was destined never to be occupied by him after the loss of his body on the battlefield at Adrianople: an interesting idea but not possible to substantiate, and as noted above her burial was not immediate upon her body's arrival in Constantinople.

82 Theodosius I's body was transferred from Milan to Constantinople following his death in 395 (Marcellinus comes s.a. 395) and marks the last transfer of a late Roman imperial corpse from west to east for burial; he was, however, essentially emperor of the east and had passed much of his reign in Constantinople.

83 Johnson (1991) 503-505; McEvoy (2010) 179-180.

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St Peter's Basilica in Rome provided a new venue for western imperial burials.[84]

The efforts of Theodosius I to create an emphasis on Constantinople as a great dynastic imperial city have been highlighted recently by scholars, noting that his exertions in this direction included the enhancement of the Apostoleion site. Indeed, Croke's recent important study of Theodosius' Constantinople observes that Theodosius went to considerable lengths to populate the Holy Apostles with imperial tombs, including Constantia among the imperial burials directed by Theodosius I.[85] Theodosius must certainly have been involved in the ceremonial surrounding Constantia's interment, but as noted above, her burial in Constantinople is not otherwise unexpected, and while Theodosius may also have been responsible for whatever re-interment or movement of the body of Valentinian I took place in 382,[86] he was not responsible for the original decision to bury Valentinian in Constantinople, taken back in 375, years before Theodosius came to power – this decision was presumably made by Valens and Gratian.[87] With the burials of Constantine I, Eusebia, Constantius II, Jovian and Valentinian I already located in the Holy Apostles, the movement to turn this site into the primary imperial mausoleum was already well underway by the time Theodosius ascended the throne, and by 383 when Constantia was interred there; nevertheless her burial must have added to the focus Theodosius was developing of the Apostoleion as a dynastic burial site. Moreover the burials at Constantinople of Valentinian I and Constantia, and the transfer from west to east of their bodies specifically for this purpose suggests that the Valentinian and Theodosian dynasties were seeking to portray themselves as part of the wider Constantinian family network. The precise location of Constantia's tomb is not recorded; Grierson suggests that her sarcophagus may have stood in the main body of the church.[88] Unfortunately, no mention is made of the ceremonial surrounding Constantia's burial.[89]

[84] McEvoy (2013b).

[85] Croke (2010) 253.

[86] Croke (2010) 253.

[87] On the lack of credit accorded Valens in the sources for his building efforts at Constantinople, see Lenski (2002) 101 and Snee (1985) esp. 406ff. Malalas 13.30, while noting Valens' secular building projects at Syrian Antioch, is silent about his church-building efforts, which may similarly result from a reluctance to credit the "Arian" emperor with such benefactions – I owe this point to one of the anonymous reviewers.

[88] Grierson (1962) 6.

[89] A few years later Gregory of Nyssa composed funeral orations for the deaths of two other imperial women (Pulcheria the daughter of Theodosius I who died in 385, and Flaccilla her mother, Theodosius' wife), yet no such lament survives to mark the death of Constantia (Gregory of Nyssa, *Oratio consolatoria in Pulcheriam* and *Oratio funebris in Flacillam Imperatricem*). See further Holum (1982) 22-23 and Croke (2010) 252.

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5. Constantia's legacy

Imperial heirs – male or female - were rare between 337-364, due in part at least to the bloodshed which followed the death of Constantine I, while over the course of the late fourth and fifth centuries, the marriages of imperial women became unusual (and sometimes highly fraught) events in a way that had not previously been the case.[90] The concerns that such marriages might raise pretenders to the throne are most famously encapsulated in the vow of the teenage princess Pulcheria in 414 to embrace lifelong virginity, rather than risk creating through her marriage a rival to her younger brother, the emperor Theodosius II.[91] But such concerns may date even earlier, to within a few years of Constantia's marriage to Gratian; indeed the changing attitude to the marriage of imperial women over the course of the late fourth and fifth centuries may well owe something to Constantia's life-experience.

Gratian himself had a half-brother and three half-sisters: his co-Augustus (from 375) Valentinian II and the princesses Galla, Grata and Justa.[92] The eldest princess Galla, in 388 married the eastern emperor Theodosius I; but the two younger sisters seem never to have married, and are mentioned in the funeral oration which Ambrose of Milan gave for their brother Valentinian II, dating to 392. Here Ambrose refers to the sisters as *sanctae necessitudines*, indicating that they had taken vows of virginity.[93] We certainly have no information that either Grata or Justa ever married.

Indeed, the marriage of imperial daughters seems to have become an increasing concern in the late fourth/early fifth century in a way that it had not been before, even during the lifetime of Constantine I, who had happily married off his female relatives to senators and favourites.[94] Christianity offered these princesses (like other elite women of their day) an option that traditional pagan religion had not, of maintaining influence and status through choosing not to marry and becoming holy virgins.[95] The alternative option for a select few princesses was marriage to a likely imperial heir – as with Galla Placidia with the general Fl. Constantius

[90] See for example the cases of the daughters of Valentinian I discussed below, and in the fifth century those of the sisters of Theodosius II and Valentinian III, on which see Holum (1982) 1-3, 79-111.

[91] Sozomen 9.1.

[92] On these sisters, see for Galla *PLRE* 1.382, for Grata *PLRE* 1.400 and Justa, *PLRE* 1.488. The emperor Valens also had two daughters, Anastasia (*PLRE* 1.58) and Carosa (*PLRE* 1.182), about whose marital state we have no information.

[93] Ambrose, *De ob. Val.* 36. Similarly Socrates 4.31.17.

[94] Constantine I's half-sister Anastasia (*PLRE* 1.58) married the senator Bassianus, for example, while another half-sister, Eutropia (*PLRE* 1.316), married the senator Virius Nepotianus (whose son Nepotianus is mentioned above, p. 155, n. 4).

[95] As has been thoroughly explored with regard to Pulcheria in particular, by Holum (1982), esp. 79-111, 130-146.

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(later Constantius III) in 417, and Ariadne with Zeno in ca. 467, or with an already acclaimed emperor – such as Galla with Theodosius I in 387, and Licinia Eudoxia with Valentinian III in 437.[96] Imperial women, particularly in the fifth century, became increasingly difficult to place in marriages which would not be perceived as a threat by the reigning emperor.

Constantia's history may well have been connected with this new imperial concern. The danger of a princess with a dynastic claim (especially a *Constantinian* dynastic claim, given the reverence still attached to the family name) falling into the hands of a pretender to the throne had been well illustrated by the usurpation of Procopius and his exploitation of possession of the young princess and winning of loyalty to himself through her. Once his usurpation had failed, the imperative of incorporating Constantia into the new ruling family was clear, and fortunately the imperial heir Gratian was available as a suitable bridegroom. Could Constantia safely have been married to any other individual without being seen to pose a threat to the new ruling dynasty? It is a question which may have influenced the unmarried state of Valentinian II's sisters Grata and Justa, who presumably lived for some time at least at the same court as Constantia in Trier and Milan. Similar concerns may also have led a few decades later to the vows of virginity taken by the sisters of Theodosius II in the east, and the still unmarried state of Valentinian III's sister Honoria in the west in the 440s, when the latter was well into her 30s.[97]

Even after her death, the ruling emperors of the fourth and fifth centuries continued to make the most of the connection they had forged with the Constantinian house through Constantia.[98] In the late 420s or 430s, when the empress Galla Placidia built a church at Ravenna dedicated to St John the Evangelist, in which was depicted a cycle of images of imperial forebears from whom she and her son the reigning western emperor Valentinian III could claim descent, she included Constantine I.[99]

[96] These dynastic marriages have been most recently explored by Croke (2014). On the career of Ariadne in particular and her major impacting of the shaping of the role of the empress in the late fifth century, see also Croke (2015).

[97] On Honoria, see *PLRE* 2.568-569 and Croke (2014) 112-116.

[98] In 384, a year after her burial, Theodosius I issued a law creating 4 additional praetors – the first two named the Constantinian and the Constantian, the other two named the Theodosian and the Arcadian. *CTh* 6.4.25 (Oct 23rd, 384, Constantinople). The Constantinian and Constantian presumably referred to Constantine I and Constantius II, but a connection with the recently buried Constantia may also have been a factor.

[99] *ILS* 818 = *CIL* 11.276. For discussion, see Deliyannis (2010) 67-69. There is a Constantius included in the emperors listed, but this is probably Placidia's late husband, Constantius III, rather than Constantius II. Deliyannis suggests that Constantius II and other emperors whose orthodoxy was questionable (Valens, Valentinian II) were omitted. The connection with Constantine could admittedly have been traced through Justina, the grandmother of Galla Placidia and second wife of Valentinian I, as well as Constantia, but no surviving ancient source refers to Justina's connection to the Constantinian family, though the case for it is persuasive.

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Later still in the 520s in Constantinople, the princess Anicia Iuliana, descended from both the Valentinian and Theodosian houses, lavishly rebuilt a church in which an inscription recorded her illustrious imperial heritage, and a mosaic depicted Constantine I's baptism.[100] Though connections with the Constantinian emperors were doubtless links later rulers would have sought to claim anyway, it was the alliance with Constantia (even in spite of her failure to produce an heir who truly brought together the houses of Constantine and Valentinian) which had given them that opportunity to do so legitimately.[101]

Conclusion

As Lenski has written, even long after the demise of the house of Constantine, theirs was a name which continued to command respect, having acquired the "indelible glow of empire."[102] Dynasty was not always the sole deciding factor in imperial accessions in this period, but there is no doubt that dynastic loyalty was something every emperor wanted both to inspire and to exploit. And though she would never achieve the fame of her great-grandmother Helena, or the fifth-century empress Pulcheria, Constantia's life experiences offer important insights into late fourth century regime-building under the new dynasties of Valentinian and Theodosius, as well as developing attitudes towards the marriages of imperial women. References to imperial women in our extant historical sources from this period often highlight only their roles as wives and mothers – at key moments when their dynastic importance mattered as far as the writers of our sources were concerned.[103] The glimpses we gain of Constantia's short life are illustrative of this pattern. When Constantia is mentioned, it is always in relation to her dynastic legacy – as heir to Constantius II, as a pawn in the usurpation of Procopius, as the wife of Gratian (thereby conferring a Constantinian connection on the house of Valentinian), and as a member of the imperial family interred in the Apostoleion at Constantinople under the supervision of Theodosius I. The appearances of Constantia at these key dynastic moments serve as important reminders of the priorities of our sources with reference to imperial women generally in this period.

Constantia's Constantinian heritage dominated the princess' short life, from the moment of her birth as the longed-for heir of the then dead

[100] Harrison (1989) 15-42; Milner (1994).

[101] Brubaker (1997) 60.

[102] Lenski (2002) 97-98.

[103] Davenport and Manley have highlighted, in contrast, the information to be gained from other sources – such as private letters – about imperial women, such as Matidia, the great-aunt of the emperor Marcus Aurelius, about whom we would know almost nothing if we relied solely on Dio or the Historia Augusta (*Fronto: Selected Letters*, 2014, London: 16, 145-146). Similarly on the earlier imperial period, Boatwright (1992) and on third/fourth century imperial women, Harries (2012) 255-257.

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Constantius II, and throughout the usurper Procopius' parading of the little girl to bolster his own claims to kinship with the Constantinian house. Despite assertions of their superiority to the Constantinian dynasty through their claiming the throne by merit rather than inheritance,[104] for the Valentinians she was a marital prize of immense value. Though her life as Gratian's empress has left little mark, we do gain glimpses of the dynasty's happily flaunting their alliance with her, as Ausonius' description of the consular robe sent to him by Gratian illustrates. Even in death, Constantia's burial alongside her father and grandfather in Constantinople offered yet another emperor, Theodosius I, the opportunity to build upon the aura of dynastic sanctity he was intent upon developing in the city, while decades and even centuries later, imperial descendants with tenuous links would claim her kinship, and through her, her forebears. Her early experiences in the camp of the usurper Procopius also acted as a warning to the new imperial dynasties of Valentinian and Theodosius of the dangers of imperial women falling into the wrong hands, potentially contributing to the restrictive attitudes of both dynasties to the marriage of princesses in the late fourth and fifth centuries. Constantia remains a shadowy figure, but one whose life's traceable events reflect both the patterns of our source material in referring to imperial women, and the vital importance to imperial politics, and to successive emperors, of dynastic loyalty, and specifically loyalty to the Constantinian house, in the late fourth century.

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[104] A common assertion in any case in Roman panegyrics, e.g Themistius, *Or.* 5, 65c-d; *Or.* 14.182a-d; Claudian, *de Cons.Hon. IV*. 214-224. See for discussion Lenski (2002) 89-92; Heather and Moncur (2001) 146, and for similar comments regarding imperial accessions in an earlier period, Davenport and Mallan (2014) 661-2.

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