COMPANION TO THE GODS, FRIEND TO THE EMPIRE: THE EXPERIENCES AND EDUCATION OF THE EMPEROR JULIAN AND HOW IT INFLUENCED HIS REIGN

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This thesis explores the life and reign of Julian the Apostate the man who ruled over the Roman Empire from A.D. 361-363. The study of Julian the Apostate’s reign has historically been eclipsed due to his clash with Christianity. After the murder of his family in 337 by his Christian cousin Constantius, Julian was sent into exile. These emotional experiences would impact his view of the Christian religion for the remainder of his life. Julian did have conflict with the Christians but his main goal in the end was the revival of ancient paganism and the restoration of the Empire back to her glory. The purpose of this study is to trace the education and experiences that Julian had undergone and the effects they had on his reign. Julian was able to have both a Christian and pagan education that would have a lifelong influence on his reign. Julian’s career was a short but significant one. Julian restored the cities of the empire and made beneficial reforms to the legal, educational, political and religious institutions throughout the Empire. The pagan historians praised him for his public services to the empire while the Christians have focused on his apostasy and “persecution” of their faith. With his untimely death in Persia, Julian’s successor Jovian, reversed most of his previous reforms and as such left Julian as the last pagan emperor of the Roman Empire.
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I would like to start by saying that this journey has been a long, tough, up-hill battle. I would not have been able to get here if I did not have the support and push that my advisors, friends and family have given me. Words seem like too little in showing the amount of gratitude that I have.

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This thesis is dedicated to my grandpa, Marshall Joseph Lilly

Requiescat in pace
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CHAPTER 1
JULIAN AND HISTORIOGRAPHY

Julian the Apostate (331/332-363AD) is the last pagan emperor of Rome. He is famous for his formidable opposition to Christianity, but there is more to Julian than meets the eye. Julian lived in a time when Christianity had, at least unofficially, become the state religion of Rome. Those who opposed it were generally subjected to severe punishments.\(^1\) The later fourth century brought fresh disasters: civil war among Constantine’s descendants and officers, Julian’s disastrous Persian expedition, and the Battle of Adrianople.\(^2\) However, Julian’s demand for a revival of pagan worship was warmly received when he became emperor of Rome and his treatment of Christians was surprisingly tolerant. Furthermore, Julian produced more extant written work than any other Roman emperor.\(^3\) Facts such as these raise the question as to why Julian embraced the pagan beliefs of earlier generations, what beliefs he held, the nature of his dispute with Christianity, and what, if any, lasting effects the last pagan emperor of Rome had on Roman religion.

Julian was a product of his environment. It was his education and experiences during his upbringing that led him to embrace paganism and denounce Christianity. They would influence his reign, both when he was stationed in Gaul and then when he became sole ruler of the empire. Furthermore, Julian was a religious innovator and held beliefs more akin to Neo-Platonism or mysticism than Hellenic polytheism. Julian dealt with increased instability on the borders, deceit and corruption. Julian called for a return to the conservative way of life. He set out to restore the Roman Empire to the height and glory that it once claimed. Julian made progress by restoring the

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\(^1\) In 341 A. D. the Emperor Constantius (337-361) banned the sacrifice at temples, to the gods and to statues under severe punishments. *Theodosian Code* 16.10.2.

\(^2\) See Appendix B, Figure B.1. 4th Century map of the Roman Empire.

\(^3\) The Emperor Marcus Aurelius is the only other ruler who comes close to Julian in regards to written material.
cities of the empire and made beneficial reforms to the legal, political, educational and religious institutes. Upon his death, the army proclaimed a Christian, Jovian, as his successor and almost all of Julian’s reforms dealing with Christianity and administration were dismissed or immediately retracted. Although the pagan religion’s last hopes died with him, the brief return of paganism to Rome also illustrates some of the problems early Christians had advancing their new religion.

Julian was raised among the elite of Roman society. However, his existence was mostly sheltered from the more traditional aspects of daily Roman life. Much of Julian’s time was spent in study. This first chapter of this thesis focuses on the historiography of Julian the Apostate and the historical significance of his relatively brief reign as emperor. The following chapter consists of a detailed analysis of Julian’s upbringing in the years preceding his reign and the education that he received during this time. It elaborates on the philosophy of those who were closest to him during this period of his life. Most notably, it discusses those who were his teachers and most responsible for his upbringing and education.

The third chapter discusses Julian’s years in the military, from being elevated to the rank of Caesar in 355, to how he came to power as emperor. Julian’s contentious relationship with the Emperor Constantius II is examined throughout this chapter. Particularly important in the third chapter is Julian’s military career as Caesar in Gaul (355-360 AD) prior to becoming emperor and his governance of Gaul at the request of Constantius II. The fourth and fifth chapters focus on Julian’s brief reign as an emperor (361-363 AD), his administration and the legacy he left behind. Although the primary focus of these chapters is on Julian’s efforts to bring about a pagan revival, as well as his discrimination against those of the Christian faith, it also examines lesser known aspects of his administration. Included in this discussion is Julian’s
devotion to education and public works as well as the Persian campaign, which ultimately led to his demise.

The historiography of Julian used in this thesis may be divided into three separate and distinct categories. The first of these categories consists of the writings of Julian himself, which are most helpful in explaining his views on religion and Christianity.\(^4\) The second category consists of the writings of Julian’s contemporaries, both pagan and church historians, in which we see Julian’s reign through the eyes of those who actually lived through it. Finally, modern scholarly research on Julian provides a broader picture of his life and administration.

Julian composed volumes of written works of speeches, satires and letters that show Julian’s military, political, religious and personal activities. The most notable of these was his essay entitled *Against the Galileans* (Antioch, 362 AD), in which he discussed his problems with the Christian faith (finding it far inferior even to the Jewish faith) and the superiority of the gods.\(^5\) Also, of significance was his written works the *Misopogon* (or “Beard Hater”) (363 AD), a work meant by Julian for consumption by his subjects, and addressed to the people of Antioch. When considering their source, the primary usefulness of Julian’s own writings in the study of his life and administration is in exposing the character, passions, and overall disposition of Julian himself.\(^6\) In other words, they can be said to reflect the true feelings of their author.

This is not to say that these are the only two of Julian’s writings that are of any historical importance. Julian wrote a number of panegyrics including two to his cousin Constantius (355 and 357AD) and one to the empress Eusebia (357AD). Julian wrote the *Panegyrics In Honor of the Emperor Constantius* not only to appease the Emperor but to reassure him of Julian’s


\(^{5}\) Julian *Against the Galileans*, 201E.

loyalty. Julian’s *Letter to the Senate and People of Athens* (361AD) attempted to justify his claim to the empire and explained his feud with Constantius II, the means through which he rose to the rank of emperor, and his lifelong conduct. Julian’s *Letter to a Priest* (362 AD) showed his desire to be a reformer within the Roman religion that he loved and practiced. Specifically, Julian called for the distinctively Christian concepts of charity and purity to be adopted within the pagan religion. W. C. Wright’s translation of Julian’s works gives important reasons why some of Julian’s works have survived as well as the reason why some letters no longer exist:

Many Letters must have been suppressed by their owners as dangerous to themselves after his death, or by the Christians because of their disrespectful allusions toward Christianity; of those that survive some were mutilated by the Christians for the same reason, while others, such as *Letter 81, To Basil*, are suspected of being Christian forgeries designed to display Julian in an unpleasant light. On the other hand, documents which could be used as evidence that Julian persecuted the Christians (e.g. *Letter 37*), or pastoral letters written in his character of *Pontifex maximus* to admonish pagan priests to imitate the Christian virtues of asceticism and charity to the poor (e.g. *Letter 20* and the *Fragment of a Letter, Vol. 2*), would not be allowed to perish.

Julian is an extremely controversial historical figure. He has been the subject of rather large amounts of scholarly writing considering his relatively brief reign. The most obvious reason for this is the question of religion. Although the persecution of Christians had occurred in the Roman Empire since the reign of Diocletian (284-305 AD), Julian ascended to the rank of emperor during a time of religious toleration for Christians that took root beginning with the reign of Constantine the Great. Constantine had embraced Christianity and declared it a *religio licita*. Among the notable aspects of Julian’s administration were his numerous efforts to

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7 In total, Julian wrote three panegyrics. Two to his cousin, Emperor Constantius II and one to Constantius’ wife Eusebia. For Julian’s imperial panegyrics see Athanassiadi pages 61-66.

8 Ibid. 145.


11 Polymnia Athanassiadi, Julian and Hellenism: An Intellectual Biography, (London: Routledge, 1992); Constantine and his so called embracement of Christianity has been the biggest debates
restore the traditional pagan religion of Rome to what he considered to be its rightful place. It is, therefore, not surprising ecclesiastical historians, such as Gregory of Nazianzus (329-390AD), as well as friends, such as the pagan philosopher Libanius, composed some of the earliest known historical writings related to Julian.12

The difficulty with ancient sources for the historian is their prejudice. Gregory was a Christian church father and was largely disdainful of Julian’s pagan religious fervor.13 Libanius, on the other hand, was a close friend and ally of Julian. Libanius had intimate knowledge of both his life and, his agenda, and claimed to be a large influence on Julian. Libanius (314-394AD) was a famous teacher of rhetoric and sophist from Syrian Antioch.14 The philosopher always gave praise to Julian in nearly all his accomplishments and from his own point of view, Julian’s tragic death was the greatest catastrophe of his era. As a devout pagan, Libanius criticized the Christians even going so far as to claim they were responsible for the death of the Emperor.15 A. F. Norman argues that Libanius was a target for both ridicule and criticism.16 Libanius, after the death of his friend, fell out of favor with the elite but rose again in status during the reign of Theodosius (379-395 AD). While serving under Theodosius, Libanius was employed to write works criticizing the administration of a previous emperor, Valens.17 For his service to the empire, Libanius was made an honorary praetorian prefect and had the privilege of legal

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12 Bowersock, Julian The Apostate, 6.
13 Bowersock, Julian the Aposate, 5.
15 Libanius initially accuses the Christians and conspirators in the Roman army of assassinating Julian in Oration 18.274, and then later takes back his claim, after evidence which contradicted his original statement. Oration 24.6.
16 Norman, Libanius, iii.
17 Norman, Libanius, iii.
inheritance for his bastard son.\textsuperscript{18} Within his important discourses, he petitioned Julian, advised the citizens of the emperor’s anger, and mourned Julian’s death.\textsuperscript{19} His testimony as a primary source should be studied right behind Ammianus Marcellinus and Julian himself.\textsuperscript{20}

In regards to primary sources, the works of Ammianus Marcellinus are possibly of the greatest importance in the study of Julian. Ammianus Marcellinus (325-391 AD), a pagan Roman historian, provided us with a chronological narrative of Julian’s rise to power and his rule as Augustus. His account covers the years 353-378.\textsuperscript{21} Ammianus, born in Antioch, served under Julian both before he became emperor out in Gaul and during the final days of the ill-fated Persian campaign. He provided a firsthand account relating to the history of Julian’s reign.\textsuperscript{22} Ammianus shows his character as an impartial historian by not just praising the man whom he thought was the model of virtue but by also criticizing and passing judgment on some actions of the emperor. His harshest criticism of the emperor was his dealings and treatment of the Christians, though he too was a pagan.\textsuperscript{23}

\textsuperscript{18} Norman, \textit{Libanius}, 3.
\textsuperscript{19} Bowersock, \textit{Julian the Apostate}, 4.
\textsuperscript{20} Norman, \textit{Libanius}, 7. For Gibbon, Libanius was “vain and an orator whose mind was incessantly fixed on the Trojan War.” G. W. Bowersock on the opposite side claims that “Libanius’ testimony takes second place only to that of Julian.” 5.
\textsuperscript{21} Ammianus wrote books that picked up after Tacitus. These books covered the reign of Nerva (96-98) on ward. The only remaining books left are the ones that cover the years 353-378.
\textsuperscript{22} Bowersock, \textit{Julian the Apostate}, 6.
The historian Zosimus (490-510 AD) was a pagan writer who saw Julian as a tragic hero whose death had finalized the victory of the Christian faith.\textsuperscript{24} Zosimus’ \textit{Historia Nova} gives us another account of the Emperor Julian’s reign. Zosimus wrote a century after Julian’s death. Being a century removed would put an author into a more objective position. His account is relevant and important because it is the only source in which we see commentary of the Greek historian Eunapius of Sardis. Eunapius (349-414 AD) wrote his history based upon the notes of Oribasius (320-400 AD) who was the personal physician and close friend of Julian.\textsuperscript{25} Oribasius served with Julian throughout his career as both Caesar and Augustus and was a valuable first-hand account. Eunapius’ original account of Julian did not survive but we are fortunate to have remarks that remain in his \textit{Lives of the Sophist}.\textsuperscript{26} 

The Christian writers and their accounts of Julian’s life and reign are biased. Unlike the pagan writers who wrote both positive accounts and still criticized Julian, the Christians attacked Julian with abandon. Accounts made Julian out to be the epitome of evil and killed by the hand of God himself. Sozomen, a later Christian historian and critic of Julian wrote “a dying Emperor looks skyward at Jesus, who descends from heaven to look upon his fallen opponent.”\textsuperscript{27} The Christian accounts of Gregory of Nazianzus (329-389AD), Sozomen (400-450AD), Socrates Scolasticus (380AD) and Theodoret (393-457AD) all seemed to be invectives rather than historical discourse that they claimed to be. Julian’s accomplishments in Gaul and bringing stability there are obscured. Only briefly do any of the Christian writers mention Julian’s reforms


\textsuperscript{25} Bowersock, \textit{Julian the Apostate}, 8.

\textsuperscript{26} Eunapius, \textit{Lives of The Sophists}, will be cited from the Loeb Classical Library edition (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1921). Trans. Wilmer Cave Wright. Eunapius also wrote a \textit{Life of Julian}, part of his \textit{Histories}, of which we have a few small fragments that were preserved.

\textsuperscript{27} Sozomen, \textit{The Ecclesiastical History of Sozomen}, Translated and Edited by Edward Walford. (London: Bohn’s Ecclesiastical Library), 6.2.347.
throughout the empire, rebuilding projects and his campaign against corruption. Most of the
Christian accounts seemed to be primarily concerned with Julian’s policies towards Christians
and how Julian “persecuted” the members of their faith. The biggest problems historians have
with the accounts from Christian writers is the consistency, or lack thereof. Most accounts were
written to make a villain out of a man whom they saw as a threat to their religion.

Following the ancient primary sources, much of the scholarship relevant to this thesis is
obtained from twentieth century sources. One of the earliest of these examinations was The
Early Life of Julian the Apostate by Norman H. Baynes. Baynes rejected the works of Libanius
and other works by Julian’s contemporaries in favor of what he deemed to be a more accurate
alternative thesis. He rejects the notion that a thirteen year old would be interested in the notes
of the modern-day equivalent of college professors. Baynes organized a telling of Julian’s early
years into what he believed a more likely chronology. Although I do not agree with him, his
main thesis is that philosophers and writers such as Libanius deliberately left out or
misrepresented some of Julian’s formative years due to their admiration or disdain for the
deceased emperor. The purpose of his work was to correct such errors.

Prior to the early-mid 1970s, there was little research on Julian that originated in the
United States. The first and among the best early scholarly biographies of Julian was La vie de
l’empereur Julien, written by Joseph Bidez and published in Paris in 1930. Considered to be
the among the best biographies of Julian, there are two important works on Julian written in

English prior to 1965: *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (Ch. 19, 22-24) by Edward Gibbon and *Julian the Apostate* by Giuseppe Ricciotti.  

Ricciotti did not focus solely on the life of Julian as emperor, but rather, divided his book somewhat equally among the various parts of Julian’s life. The first three chapters focused largely on Julian’s early life and how some of his views as emperor were formed. The next several chapters discuss the mid-years of Julian’s life during which he became governor of Gaul and served in the Roman military. Only in the final chapters of the book does Ricciotti examine Julian’s brief time as an emperor, his disdain for Christianity, his administration, and his final military campaign against the Persians. Julian is referred to as an “apostate” inasmuch as he is said to have renounced Christianity. A distinguishing factor of Ricciotti’s book is his emphasis on the Arian nature of what faith if any, Julian ever had in Christianity while speaking favorably of Julian’s fiscal and political reforms. Ricciotti may have been trying to imply that, in holding Arian beliefs, Julian had never accepted “true” Christianity to begin with (and therefore, was not a true apostate).

The lack of harsh undertones in Ricciotti’s book should not be interpreted as meaning that he approved of all aspects of Julian’s life and reign. This is not the case. He viewed Julian as a religious fanatic. Although Julian did not openly call for violence against Christians, Ricciotti noted Julian’s insistence that they be excluded from nearly all aspects of public life and treated as second class citizens. Viewing Julian’s life as a whole, Ricciotti sees him as naïve

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31 Ibid. 231. It should be noted that Giuseppe Ricciotti’s biography was original titled *L’Imperatore Giuliano l’Apostata secondo i documenti*, was published in 1956, and translated into English by M. Joseph Costelloe in 1960.

32 Kaegi, “Research on Julian the Apostate 1945-1964.” *The Classical World* 58. 8 (1965): 231. Julian was brought up as an Arian Christian since it was Constantius that was ruling and favored the Arian sect. During his teenage years Julian had to keep the appearance up being an Arian Christian because he was fearful for his life.

and unrealistic with aspirations to restore paganism to the Roman Empire that had no grounding in the realities of his time.\textsuperscript{34}

Other major scholarship on Julian during this time period consisted of a series of the published lectures by Guido Gigli (University of Rome) who argued, like Ricciotti, that Julian did not accept the title of emperor willingly. Gigli and Ricciotti similarly argue that Julian was forced to accept the title.\textsuperscript{35} Gigli found Julian to be of a strong moral character and further theorized that Julian had ulterior motives behind his Persian campaign of 363 with no intention of actual conquest.\textsuperscript{36}

While Ricciotti and Bidez certainly occupy an important place in contemporary studies on Julian, the “golden age” of scholarship on this subject began in the mid-late 1970s and continued throughout the early 1980s. During this period, three complete historical biographies of Julian were published along with a partial biography providing an in-depth analysis of Julian’s Hellenistic polytheism and philosophy. In \textit{The Emperor Julian}, Robert Browning approaches the life of Julian by attempting to write a non-partisan book about the life of an emperor that has often been romanticized in fictional literature.\textsuperscript{37} Julian was a polarizing historical figure because he rejected Christianity in the post-Constantine era and much of the scholarship on his life emphasized his opposition to Christianity. While Browning discusses this subject in his biography, his focus is on the portions of Julian’s life that have been the subject of some degree of neglect in the past.

\textsuperscript{34} Ibid. 257-258.
\textsuperscript{35} Kaegi, “Research on Julian the Apostate 1945-1964.” 231.
\textsuperscript{36} Kaegi, “Research on Julian the Apostate 1945-1964.” 231.
Browning places a larger emphasis on Julian’s military endeavors. Many agree that the most significant researched portions of this book are those that describe Julian’s campaigns in Gaul and Persia. This book is particularly helpful in researching Julian’s military background. However, the portions of the book focusing on Julian’s brief reign are also important because they portray him as the philosopher that Julian believed himself to be. However, Browning is not without his critics. Although it has won praise for its non-partisan evaluation of Julian’s life, *The Emperor Julian* is often criticized for its lack of footnotes and annotations to support Browning’s theories, and in particular, in those instances throughout the book where he attempts to provide the reader with insight into the inner thought processes of a fourth-century emperor.

Constance Head reached many of the same conclusions as Browning in her book that bears the same title (*The Emperor Julian*). Authors who have criticized Browning for his efforts to portray Julian in a “fourth century framework” would likely find Constance Head to have more credible and thoughtful analysis. This is not to say that the two books are exactly the same, but rather, that they reach many of the same conclusions for different reasons. While Browning viewed Julian as being a man of his time, Head sees him as having been born several hundred years too late. The main point of contention between Head and Browning is whether Constantius actually endorsed Julian as the next emperor of Rome on his deathbed. Head argues the notion of a deathbed endorsement to be credible whereas Browning believes it to be propaganda.

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Just as Head and Browning endeavor to write a non-partisan and un-romanticized account of Julian’s life, G. W. Bowersock does the same in his book titled *Julian the Apostate*. One notable difference in the style of these three authors is the manner in which they seek to accomplish this objective. Neither Browning nor Head tend to be overly lavish in either praising or criticizing Julian. Bowersock’s criticism with the historiography of Julian throughout his book could be described from the opening pages as he writes that when studying Julian:

One must clear out the impressions that linger from reading fictional masterworks . . . [and] must alike reject, firmly and dispassionately, the lonely hero struggling against the onslaught of corrupt Christianity, the apostate manipulated by the forces of evil, and the courageous friend of the Jews. Julian was none of these.42

His aim with this book is to disprove what he perceives as the romanticized myth of Julian as something akin to a “philosopher king” and, like Head, to portray him instead as a sad failure that was out-of-step with his time.43

There are two important differences between Bowersock and Head. First is the initial historiography in which Bowersock appears to reject works which portray Julian in a positive light in favor of those which view him more negatively. For a book which strives to separate itself from *La vie de l’empereur Julien* due to Bidez’s heavy reliance on the works of Ammianus Marcellinus, Bowersock cannot help but cite him rather consistently throughout.44 This is true of Browning and Head as well because there are few – if any – more reliable sources from sources

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who lived during Julian’s time: Bowersock himself notes the inherent questionability of Gregory of Nazianzus as a reliable primary source.\(^{45}\)

There are some minor discrepancies in the conclusions reached by Browning, Head, and Bowersock. They all, however, reach many of the same conclusions as Bidez and, for that matter, Ricciotti.\(^{46}\) The main difference between all of these scholars is in their personal interpretation of Julian as a man. If any of the modern historians (aside from Bidez) were to stand out, it would certainly be G. W. Bowersock.\(^{47}\)

Another book, written during the same period, which may possibly be of greater importance to scholars of Julian, and which is of particular importance to this thesis, is *Julian and Hellenism: An Intellectual Biography* by Polymnia Athanassiadi. A major advantage of this book is the simple fact that it is not a biography of the entire life of Julian and is not intended to be. Rather, Athanassiadi seeks to look at specific areas of Julian’s life through a historical microscope. In particular, she considers Julian’s youth and religion throughout the book.

*Julian and Hellenism: An Intellectual Biography* provides a highly detailed look at the early life, philosophy, and religion of the emperor. It typically concentrates on events that occurred before his reign.\(^{48}\) One way it greatly differs from other major works on the subject is the depth to which it examines Julian’s pagan philosophy and the assertion of the view that he

\(^{45}\) Bowersock, *Julian The Apostate*, 6. Bowersock tells us that the Bishop from Nazianzus was a schoolmate of Julian’s while they both studied at Athens. He also states that Gregory was very perceptive as well as passionately hostile and well versed in the current facts and gossip.


\(^{47}\) The death of Julian has been a continuous source of speculation. Some say he was stabbed by “friendly fire” while some (Libanius) note that he was stabbed by a Christian soldier within his own army. However one wants to lean in regards to who killed Julian, it is fact that the Roman Emperor Julian died the night of June 26th, 363 AD from wounds that he suffered in battle. One of the most compelling chapters in Bowersocks book discusses the death of Julian which, in nearly all sources, is the source of much speculation. Bowersock theorizes that the person responsible for Julian’s death was a Saracen wielding a Persian spear.

should remain the object of praise.49 Bowersock criticizes one of Athanassiadi’s theses: that Julian never truly accepted the Christian faith and could not, therefore, be considered an apostate.50 For Bowersock, Athanassiadi’s research is called into question because she simply believes that Julian publicly converted to Christianity during the reign of Constantius II to avoid speculation that he was part of a pagan conspiracy.51 Bowersock is also critical of Athanassiadi’s praise of Julian’s educational policy. Athanassiadi finds Julian’s law on education “rich in feeling and crystalline in its logic.”52 This is not to suggest that Bowersock’s view of her work is dismissive. Julian and Hellenism is inherently useful when considering Julian’s religious and philosophical views in the broader context of Neo-Platonism, which is one of the primary focuses of the book.

Finally, The Age of Constantine and Julian by Diana Bowder focuses primarily on the differences in policy between Constantine and Julian, in particular, those related to religion.53 Although the book does not consider policy changes by the sons of Constantine (such as Constantius II), it attempts to compare and contrast between one emperor who was viewed as a Christian hero and another widely viewed as an enemy of the faith.54 Bowder’s work is important because she considers archaeological evidence as well as evidence from written texts in her examinations of both Constantine and Julian. Although many of the other authors noted the manner in which Julian was portrayed in statues and Roman

49 Ibid. 222.
51 Ibid. 82; Athanassiadi, Julian and Hellenism, 44.
54 Gregory, The Age of Constantine, 608.
coinage, Bowder expands upon such evidence using photographs and descriptions of relics, buildings, and churches recovered from this period. Although first-hand accounts of Julian’s life as written by his contemporaries are likely the most important means through which scholars can understand Julian, nearly all modern scholars have noted the difficulty in obtaining correct and unbiased information on Julian. The archaeological evidence discussed by Bowder is not only useful to a scholar interested in the life of Julian, but also in examining the relationship between Christians and pagans in the fourth-century Roman Empire.

Following this “golden age” of scholarship on Julian during the later 1970s and early 1980s, several other books examined Julian in a far broader context. One of these notable books was How Rome Fell by Adrian Goldsworthy. In the chapter entitled “The Pagan,” Goldsworthy makes little attempt to write a comprehensive biography of Julian but focuses instead on some key aspects of his reign. Because the overall focus of his book is on the fall of the Roman Empire, one primary area of focus is Julian’s Persian campaign and the problematic issues it created for Jovian, his successor. Although it does not purport to explain the reason behind Julian’s beliefs, it is most useful in explaining how Julian’s attempt at a pagan reformation affected those who succeeded him. A History of the Roman Empire A.D. 284-641 by Stephen Mitchell gives similar treatment to Julian inasmuch as it attempts to consider his reign in the broader context of providing a history of the late empire as a whole.

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59 Goldsworthy, How Rome Fell, 238-244.
The last of these three books which examine Julian more broadly, is *Roman Imperial Policy from Julian to Theodosius* by Malcolm Errington. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of this book is that it begins with the death of Julian and only briefly touches on a few key aspects of his reign (all of which are explained in far greater detail by other author).61 This book, as with the others in this category, is primarily useful when discussing Julian’s legacy and what he contributed to the empire as a whole during his reign. Although Julian left very little behind with respect to his religious reforms (thanks to his successors), he did enact several key imperial policies that survived him.62

Although the period beginning with the mid-1980s saw very little new scholarship on Julian, this changed in the early twentieth century with the publication of several books offering new perspectives on his life and reign with selected readings of particular importance to scholars. Shaun Tougher’s book *Julian the Apostate* is one of the most important works to examine because of the manner in which he explains controversial aspects of Julian’s reign, quotes modern and primary sources, and encourages readers to come to their own conclusions. Although the book contains some original thought by the author, the work is helpful in the manner in which it selects, combines and translates so many primary sources related to Julian.63

The most controversial aspect of Julian’s life and reign, his religion, is the focus of Adrian Murdoch’s *The Last Pagan*.64 This is possibly the most comprehensive examination of Julian’s life since the late-1970s and early-1980s. Murdoch provides a valiant defense of Julian

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62 According to the *Theodosian Code* several of Julian’s policies survived even though his religious ones were thrown out almost immediately after his death. Julian imposed penalties on governors who purposefully delayed appeals in court cases for one. *Theodosian Code* 8.5.12.

63 Shaun Tougher, *Julian the Apostate*, 77-177.

using both written scholarship and archaeological evidence. Although (as with all books on Julian) Murdoch takes note of his failures, this book provides a defense of Julian’s reign comparable in many respects to Athanassiadi. Over half of this book focuses on Julian’s reign (and a large portion of that half focuses on his religion). Overall, *The Last Pagan* aims to paint an immensely personal portrait of Julian as emperor while humanizing an emperor who was seen as one of the greatest threats to early Christianity.

It is readily apparent in reviewing both the classic primary and contemporary secondary scholarship surrounding Julian’s reign that, had he not been such an enthusiastic pagan and consistent administrator during the post-Constantine era, Julian’s contributions to the Roman Empire would likely have been forgotten. Julian would have been viewed as one of many successors of Constantine who ruled briefly during a period in which the empire as a whole was on the decline. Julian was consistent with his policies and actions as emperor, his consistent policies and actions being extensions from his successful policies from while he was stationed in Gaul. Julian was successful in securing the western frontier borders, attempted to eradicate corruption within the empire, sought to reform the taxation system, and had plans to rebuild cities that were in decay. It was experiences from his youth and education that fundamentally shaped his ruling and ideals during his short-lived reign. It was his untimely death in 363 during the fighting against Shapur II and the Sassanids out in the East that halted his plans. Christianity would take its strong hold and become the dominating religion after Julian’s successor, Jovian, was named emperor. Julian would become forever known as the last emperor or “Apostate” who opposed Christianity. His military successes, reforms, and edicts would be reversed pushed to the side, and not be taken for the significant actions that had lasting impact on the empire. With
Julian’s death, Christianity was to be solidified and all emperors following Julian were to be Christians.
CHAPTER 2
JULIAN’S CHILDHOOD, EXPERIENCES, AND EDUCATION

Julian was lucky enough but also unlucky enough to have been born into one of the most well known and influential families in Roman history. Julian’s father, Julius Constantius (d. 337) was half-brother to Flavius Valerius Aurelius Constantinus, also known as Constantine I (r. 306-337AD) or Constantine the Great. Both were the sons of emperor Constantius Chlorus or Constantius I (293-306AD).\(^{65}\) The two princes had different mothers: Julius’ mother was Flavia Theodora, Constantine’s mother was Flavia Helena.\(^{66}\) Libanius claimed that Julius stepped aside from claiming the throne because he felt that it was best for the empire if his brother was allowed to rule.\(^{67}\) In the 330s Constantine began to promote his brothers and relatives to positions of power. Julius’s brother Flavius Dalmatius held the consulship in 333 and Julius was consul in 335.\(^{68}\) In the same year, Dalmatius, the son of Flavius Dalmatius was elevated to the rank of Caesar\(^{69}\) and given authority over Thrace and Moesia while his brother, Hannibalianus was proclaimed king of Armenia.\(^{70}\)

Flavius Claudius Julianus, later to be Emperor Julian, was probably born late 331A.D. in the city of Constantinople. The exact date and year of Julian’s birth is an ongoing scholarly

\(^{65}\) Libanius 18.8. He claims that Julius Constantius had more of a claim to the Empire then Constantine had.

\(^{66}\) See Family Tree. Appendix B Figure B.2. Constantine was the older of the brothers being born in 272 to Julius Constantius 289 A. D.


\(^{69}\) The rank of *Caesar* under Emperor Diocletian and his Tetrarchy (leadership of four) was a title that represented the “heir apparent” or “Junior Emperor.” This title was often seen in association with the title of *Princeps Iuventutis* “Prince of Youth.”

\(^{70}\) Tougher, *Julian the Apostate*, 12.
Julian’s father was consul Julius Constantius and his mother was a well educated, aristocratic Christian woman named Basilina. Ammianus claimed Basilina was from an elite family in Bithynia. Julian’s mother died several months after Julian was born and Julian wrote that she was “snatched away while she was still a young girl … from so many misfortunes that were to come.” Julian and his bright future came crashing down when on May 22, 337, his powerful uncle Constantine died. Very soon after the emperor’s death, his sons, Constantine II, Constantius II and Constans, were declared co-emperors by the Roman army. Church historian Eusebius claimed that the army would accept these three sons and no others. There are several stories that seem to be manufactured by Eusebius including the one just mentioned. According to Philostorgius…

Constantine having entered upon the thirty-second year of his reign was poisoned by his brothers at Nicomedia. The plot was discovered, he drew up a testament telling the authors of his death and ordering that whichever of his sons should first arrive, should take measures against them. He further adds, the document itself…was entrusted to Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia… [Constantius] was the first to arrive out of the brothers.

The control of the empire by the brothers, including Constantius II, resulted in the murder of other potential rivals to the throne in an effort to restore order and to solidify their positions.

Although the precise date of the assassination of Julian’s relatives is unknown, it is likely that it

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71 For the debate on Julian’s birth see Robert Browning, The Emperor Julian, 32; N.H. Baynes, “The Early Life of Julian the Apostate.” *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 45 252. The date 331 has been found to be the accepted date by most of the main scholars of Julian. G.W.Bowersock, Wilmer C. Wright, Constance Head, Shaun Tougher and Rowland Smith all claim that Julian was born in 331 AD. On the opposite side is F.D. Gilliard who in his article “Notes on the Coinage of Julian the Apostate” *Journal of Roman Studies*, 54 (1964) 139-140 argues that Julian was a “Taurus” being born in late May or early June in 332.

72 Ammianus Marcellinus 25. 3. 23.

73 Julian *The Misopogon*, 352B.


75 This quote is from Philostorgius: *Church History* [2.16]. This was written in 439. His history is lost and only fragment remain that are put together by the ninth century Byzantine scholar Photius. The quote was taken from Shaun Tougher Julian the Apostate, 159.
took place in 337 A.D. Julian would soon discover the dangers of belonging to the imperial family after the death of his uncle Constantine. This would have a very large impact on Julian’s youth because Julian claimed, “Upon their accession, nearly all other male members of Constantine’s line were purged by the army.” In the aftermath of the slaughter called the “Massacre of the Princes” Julian’s father Julius Constantius, his uncle Flavius Dalmatius and his cousins Dalmatius and Hannibalianus along with several others were put to death. Julian and his half-brother Gallus were spared only because of their youth. Most historians such as Athanassiadi and Tougher along with ancient and modern historians have little doubt that Constantius played a part in the death of his family members. No ancient ecclesiastical sources tie Constantius to the slaughter of his relatives, but Julian asserted that Constantius admitted his guilt. As Constantius was the brother with the most control over their father’s sprawling empire, it is certainly true that he had the greatest motive to order these assassinations. Julian, from the time of his family’s murders in 337 AD to his accession of sole power in 361AD, had Constantius looming in his life. The empire had been split between the three sons, the eldest, Constantine, taking Britain, Gaul, and Spain, the middle brother Constans the rest of the European provinces, while Constantius took the east. This arrangement would only last three years. In the spring of 340 the oldest, tried to exert his authority over Constans and tried to

76 Polymnia Athanassiadi, Julian: An Intellectual Biography, (New York: Routledge, 1992), 13; Norman Baynes, The Early Life of Julian the Apostate. The Journal of Hellenic Studies. Vol. 45, Part II (1925). 252; Every modern scholar has accepted that the “massacre of the princes” took place either in August or September of 337A.D. Some historians such as Athanassiadi and Peter Brown claim that six of Julian’s relatives were killed while others such as G.W.Bowersock, Robert Browning, Shaun Tougher and Pat Southern say that it was eight relatives. Whatever the truth, Constantius was the one that had the most to gain from this and he is the man that Julian would forever hold responsible for the killings.

77 Julian Letter to the Athenians, 270C-270D. See Appendix B Figure B.3 Family tree of all killed in the year 337.

78 Zosimus 2.40.

79 Julian Letter to the Athenians, 271A.
invade Italy, only to be killed in battle at Aquileia. Due to the civil war between the two brothers in the west, this left only Constans ruling the Latin-speaking west and Constantius the Greek-speaking east. Constantius would not gain sole rule of the empire until he defeated the usurper Magnentius, first in the Battle of Mursa Major in 351AD. and again at the Battle of Mons Seleucus in 353.

In regards to what Julian thought, there was little doubt that Constantius II was responsible. Constantius was in Constantinople at the time it happened and, if he personally ordered the attack or not, he did nothing to prevent it. Julian did not blame either of the other two brothers Constantine II and Constans because they were away in the western provinces. By the time Julian wrote his *Letter to the Athenians* both brothers were dead. Many years later, when he realized that there could not be peace with the emperor, Julian sent letters to the senates of major cities that were between himself and his rival cousin in hopes of gaining support. These letters were sent out to justify the actions that he was taking and outline the crimes Constantius had committed against him and his own family. This would be a very big influence on Julian because not only had his mother died several months after he was born but his father, a practicing Christian, along with several uncles, cousins and a half-brother were murdered by a “Christian” relative. The *Letter to the Athenians* describes the massacre of his family:

> Our fathers were brothers, sons of the same father. And close kinsmen as we were, how this most humane Emperor treated us! Six of my cousins and his, and my father who was his own uncle and also another uncle of both of us on the father’s side, and my eldest

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81 The Battle of Mursa Major was one of the bloodiest battles in Roman history. Constantius is said to have lost half of his troops and Magnentius lost two-thirds of his. Magnentius finally was defeated two years later at the Battle of Mon Selucus. This is an interesting time since such a position of sole ruler was unusual in the later empire. Power sharing had become the norm when Diocletian took his Maximian as his co-ruler in 286.

82 Constantine II was killed in 340 when he faced off against his brother Constans. Constans was to meet his death when he was murdered by the usurper Magnentius in 350 A.D. Both Edward Gibbon, *Chapter I8* and Eutropius 10. 9.6. tell the story of the usurpation and assassination of Constans at Autun.
brother, he put to death without a trial; and as for me and my other brother, he intended to put us to death but finally inflicted exile upon us…

Ammianus claimed that Constantius “destroyed root and branch all who were related to him by blood and race.” This was not true because there were survivors such as Julian himself, his older half-brother Gallus, and an uncle also named Julian. The brothers were supposedly spared due to Gallus’ health and Julian’s youth. Along with the brothers, a distant relative Procopius, Gallus’ sister who was married to Constantius, and finally Julian’s maternal grandmother were all spared in the killings.

With not wanting to have the two youths gain popularity in Constantinople, Constantius sent Julian and his brother off to stay with family in Nicomedia where his education and upbringing was entrusted to his relative, the Bishop Eusebius of Nicomedia. According to Libanius, Julian throughout his education never expected or received any special privileges in school because he was the emperor’s cousin. Eusebius was given the see of Constantinople in 339 AD and Julian followed his relative to the capital. Soon after, Constantius worried about the child of Julius Constantius being in Constantinople and decided to exile Julian and his brother Gallus to Macellum, a secluded imperial estate in Cappadocia. It was here that the two boys

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83 Here Julian is referring to his older half-brother Gallus. Gallus’ full name is Flavius Claudius Julius Constantius Gallus.
84 Julian Letter to the Athenians, 270 C-270D. Julian’s Against the Cynic Heraclius, 227C-234C mentions the murders that occurred after the death of Constantine and blames Constantine for not teaching the sons any virtue. Julian harps about Constantius’ character by saying he is deceived, neglectful, and strong prey to flatters.
85 Ammianus Marcellinus 21.16.8.
86 Libanius 18.10.
87 There is little to any information on Gallus’ sister. Joseph Bidez in his Empereur Julien, 8 calls her Constantia, while on the other hand, Giuseppe Ricciotti in Julian the Apostate, 6 calls her Fausta.
88 Ammianus Marcellinus 22.9.4. Baynes, Early Life of Julian the Apostate, 252.
89 Libanius 18.11.
90 Sozomen 5.2.9; Sozomen not only tells the location of Macellum being close to Caesarea in Cappadocia but also paints a positive picture of the place the two boys were sent, stating that they lived in “a magnificent palace and was adorned with baths, gardens and perennial fountains.” See Appendix B Figure B.4 for map of Macellum.
lived for six years as virtual prisoners. Throughout their youths, Julian and Gallus were thrown back and forth across the Empire and given few privileges in regards to their imperial class. Julian recalled the miserable time that he and his brother Gallus had while they were in exile before the older was called to a meeting with the emperor:

How shall I describe the six years we spent there? For we lived as though on the estate of a stranger and we were watched as though we were in some Persian garrison, since no stranger came to see us and not one of our old friends was allowed to visit us; so that we were shut off from every liberal study and from all free intercourse, in a glittering servitude, and sharing the exercises of our own slaves as though they were comrades. For no companion of our own age ever came near us or was allowed to do so.91

Julian states in later years that if something had gone wrong with Gallus’ character it was due to the fact that they had been locked up for too long.92

During his six years in exile, Julian began his education and quest for knowledge that would have a profound influence on him then and later in his life. It is also here during the years at Macellum, that Julian gained thorough knowledge of the Christian scriptures. Julian was allowed to borrow books from the Arian Christian bishop, George of Cappadocia. The bishop had an extensive library of both Christian writings and classical texts.93 In a letter to a friend, Julian recalls that “It was from childhood, I have been penetrated by a passionate longing for books.”94 One of Julian’s earliest and most influential teachers would be his mother’s old tutor the eunuch, Mardonius. It was under Mardonius that Julian came to love and cherish the classic authors such as Homer and Hesiod.95

91 Julian Letters to the Athenians, 271C-272A; the date of 342 A.D. is accepted for when the youths were transferred to Macellum; Eunapius 473 tells that the royal eunuchs (not Mardonius) had it among their duties to keep vigilant watch over the Christian faith of the two boys.
92 Julian Letter to the Athenians, 271D.
93 P. Athanassiadi, Julian: An Intellectual Biography, (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), 23. Athanassiadi claims suggest that George had taken the place of Julian’s teacher since the death of Eusebius.
94 Julian Letter to Ecdicius Prefect of Egypt, (Wright III, 73-75).
95 Julian Misopogon, 351A-352C; Bowersock, Julian the Apostate, 24; Tougher, Julian the Apostate, 14.
Julian was never drawn to the stories of the Bible because to the youth, since they were certainly not as appealing as the Greek myths that he admired. It is not difficult to see why young Julian was repelled by Christianity as a whole but played along in order to survive. The Christian faith that preached “Thou shalt not kill” had the emperor Constantius, who had executed all but a few of Julian’s family members. Julian found another reason why he disliked Christianity with the fact that the Christians were constantly at each other’s throats and had a lack of unity. In fact, during his time, the Christians openly persecuted other Christian sects that had differing theologies. Julian later wrote in a letter, that he found the inability of the Christians to get along as one of their most “unlovely traits.” To Julian, his Christian teachers (none of whom he names in his writings), had a wrongful literal interpretation of the biblical stories. The Christians understood and took the stories of the Bible as historically and completely true. This was different than how the Greek myths were to be interpreted. To Julian and the philosophers, these myths were allegorical tales that would reveal the nature of the gods, along with their hidden truths and mysteries. Although Julian had issues with the Christians and their literal interpretations, he was drawn to the structure and discipline of the teachings of the Church. It is no surprise that Julian later became a disciple of the later Neo-Platonic school and was an initiate of certain cults, one being the mystery cult of Mithras. Due to the severe discipline of the cult, it was attractive to one who had been estranged by early associations from...

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96 It is important to mention the big competing sects that were vying for power during this time period, the Athanasians (the Orthodox Christians) and the Arian Christians. Both were rival factions and their main point of dispute was on the Nature of Christ. The Arians claimed that there was once a time when Christ Was Not; this meaning that he was less than God the Father and similar but not of the same substance. The Orthodox Christians argued that there was Absolute likeness and same substance of both God the Father and God the Son. Under Constantine the Orthodox Christians flourished while the Arians were to be the ones that held the upper hand when Constantius II was in power.

97 Julian To the Citizens of Bostra, 129; cf. Ammianus Marcellinus 22.5.4.
the similar teachings of the Christians. Libanius describes Julian’s teacher Mardonius as an admirable eunuch who guided and guarded the youth’s virtue. Julian remembered his teacher, Mardonius fondly and would later say that he was very influential in his childhood. Julian writes about his tutor Mardonius in his *Misopogon:*

> My tutor, he was a barbarian, a Scythian by race, and he had the same name as the man who persuaded Xerxes to attack Greece... He was a eunuch, a term which twenty months ago was oft-mentioned and revered, but now is used as an insult and a reproach... I was handed over to him in my seventh year. This man from that time led me to instruction by one road; and since he did not want to know any other and did not permit me to walk any other he caused me to be hated by you all.

Although Julian gave us the image of a miserable imprisonment in his *Letter to the Athenians*, Gregory of Nazianzus presented the stay at Macellum as a training of both Julian and Gallus for imperial power, also detailing their developments as Christians. Both Gallus and Julian were baptized and made lectors at a local Arian church that was close to the estate. Julian, who loved attention from his youth to his adult years, may have found this the only enjoyable thing while being a lector. When he was older Julian wrote about how as a youth, he had longed to give himself to a divine higher power so that he felt accepted in return. He expressed that in his *hymn* in praise to the Sun God, Helios. “From my childhood an extraordinary longing for the rays of the god penetrated deep into my soul...The heavenly light shone all around me, and ... it roused and urged me on to its contemplation.” Julian later

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98 Wright, *Introduction to Oration IV*, 349; Julian mentions he was initiated into the Cult of Mithras in his *Hymn to King Helios*, 130C.

99 Libanius 18.11.

100 Julian *Misopogon*, 351A-352C.

101 Gregory of Nazianzus *Against Julian Oration*, 4.22; Gregory was a contemporary of Julian. They both studied at Athens during the same time period but were in different academic circles.; Sozomen 5.2.9.

102 Gregory *Oration*, 4.52 and *Oration*, 4.23; Sozomen 5.2.

103 Julian *Hymn to the King Helios*, 130C.
wrote a response to the cynic Heracleios speaking that as a youth he had been accepted by the
gods, and especially by Helios Mithra.104

After six years of being at Macellum, the two brothers were recalled from exile. Gallus,
now in his twenties, was called to meet with Constantius and while Gallus simply swapped
Macellum for the imperial court itself, Julian was able to devote his time in furthering his
education.105 Even though Julian knew what had happened to his family he was careful not to
bring too much attention to himself in fear that his cousin would finish what he started. Julian
would become a student of philosophy, something that he had wanted to do since he had been
instructed by his teacher Mardonius. Julian’s personal appearance as a young man following his
departure from Macellum was anything but princely. Julian admitted that he was never very neat
or the most attractive, and instead of dressing his class, dressed in a pallium (student tunic or
top).106 During a time when the fashion was to be clean shaven, the young student was
determined to grow and keep a philosopher’s beard.107 Gregory Nazianzus, claiming to be a good
judge of character, delivers one of the most one-sided descriptions of Julian:

His behavior and excitability… A sign of no good seemed to me to be his neck unsteady,
his shoulders quaking and shaking, his eyes rolling and glancing from side to side with a
certain insane expression, his feet unsteady and stumbling, his nostrils breathing
insolence and disdain, the gestures of his face ridiculous, his burst of laughter
unrestrained, his nods of assent and dissent without any reason and his speech and
questions without any order and unintelligent.108

104 Julian To Heracleios, 229C.
105 Bowersock, Julian the Apostate, 27; Tougher, Julian the Apostate, 16; Peter Brown, Power and Persuasion in
Late Antiquity, (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), 61.
106 Julian Misopogon, 238B-239C This is Julian’s most detailed account of his appearance. Since this is a satire, one
must be careful of taking every word of Julian’s literally.
107 We learn of Julian’s beard in his Letter to the Athenians, 247C. He talked about how upset he was that
Constantius made him shave it off in order to be presentable as a newly appointed Caesar. Julian was trying to
emulate the “Philosopher beard” that his favorite influential Emperors such as Marcus Aurelius and Antonius Pius
had done.
108 Gregory Nazianzus Oration 5.23.
Ammianus comes to Julian’s rescue and describes him as a normal heir from the Constantinian family having a thick muscular neck, chest and a straight nose that was above a noticeably large lower lip.\textsuperscript{109}

While Gallus continued to be a semi-prisoner in the imperial court, waiting to become Caesar in 351, Julian was restored at the schools of Constantinople where he would study rhetoric and become a pupil under Nicoles and Hecebolius.\textsuperscript{110} Hecebolius was a Christian and an outspoken opponent of the old gods while Nicoles was a teacher of rhetoric and pagan rival of Libanius.\textsuperscript{111} Even though a rival, Libanius did give him credit for being important to Julian’s education stating that “When you were nearing manhood, your instructor was a Spartan man [Nicoles], a priest of righteousness, a leader in learning, who knew the secrets of the mind of Homer and all of Homer’s school.”\textsuperscript{112} Julian on the verge of manhood \textit{(prosebos)}, started to draw the eye of his cousin Constantius. Constantius grew fearful that Julian would draw too much attention and his capital city would be attractive for Julian’s excellence and so he again set up facilities for his education and packed him off to the city of Nicomedia.\textsuperscript{113} Julian again was sent away to stay out of the public eye and focus on his studies. Eunapius wrote that Constantius sent Julian away and consented to letting him study and enjoy his books because he would rather

\textsuperscript{109} Ammianus Marcellinus 25.4.22.

\textsuperscript{110} Libanius 15.27 and 18.12.

\textsuperscript{111} Smith, \textit{Julian’s Gods}, 26. Smith claims that while teaching Julian, Hecebolius was outspoken against the old gods but a “willing apostate” in 363. Athanassiadi, \textit{Julian and Hellenism}, 28-29 claims that Nicoles was an influential teacher in the allegory of Homer while Hecebolius was an incompetent instructor who would later be the butt of criticism by Julian.

\textsuperscript{112} Libanius \textit{Oration 15}. 27; Socrates Ecclesiastical History, 3.10 Socrates talks about how Nicoles was a Laccaemonian(Spartan) that was an instructor of grammar and Hecebolius was a Christian who taught rhetoric. Some modern historians such as Rowland Smith, 26-27, and Shaun Tougher, 25 second-guess Libanius’ account of both of these teachers due to the fact that Libanius was professionally against Hecebolius and had a fluctuating attitude towards his rival Nicoles.

\textsuperscript{113} Libanius, Orations, 18.13; Bowersock, \textit{Julian the Apostate}, 27-28. Nicomedia was around sixty miles from Constantinople and was across the Straits in Asia minor.
have him “browse among books…than have him reflect on his own family and his claim to the empire.”

Once in the city, it was a matter of time before Julian heard of a famous pagan named Libanius and wished to become one of his students. Libanius was a native Antiochean rhetor with a good reputation who had been teaching in the city since 343 and would continue to teach there until 349. Hecebolius, who seemed to accompany Julian to Nicomedia, forced his student to take an oath not to attend Libanius’ lectures. Julian was able to stick to the letter of his oath by hiring someone to obtain for him copies of his lectures. The indirect teacher-student pedagogy would not last long but Libanius would never tire of stating how his rhetorical style had a lasting influence on the man that would be later emperor. The two would later be friends, while stationed in Gaul Julian sent copies of his panegyrics to Libanius. Libanius meanwhile stayed a devoted friend and subject to Julian, always defending him to the people of Antioch and even writing a *Funeral Oration to Julian*. Julian, always being watched by Constantius’ spies (*agentes in rubis*), would have to keep up his duties within the church and like as in Macellum, would serve as a lector in Nicomedia.

While the prince continued his studies in the city of Nicomedia, Constantius ran into trouble within the Empire and thought it appropriate to elevate Gallus in 351. Gallus was elevated to the rank of Caesar and helped distract the Persians while Constantius turned his eye on the uprisings and the usurpers in the West. Since both of Constantius’ brothers were out of the

114 Eunapius 474.
115 Bowersock, *Julian the Apostate*, 27. Bowersock writes Libanius would leave Nicomedia in 349 to teach at the capital city of Constantinople for four years and then return to his native Antioch.
116 Libanius 18.13-14. Libanius attributes Hecabolius’ forced oath to professional jealousy. Constantius may have been behind the forced oath seeing that Libanius was a very famous follower of classical philosophy and the old gods.
117 Socrates 3.12-15; Libanius 18.15.
118 Libanius 18.15.
119 Socrates 3.1; Sozomen 5.2.
picture, it would make sense that he turned to a relative who was of perfect age. While this was going on in the empire, Julian started a new direction within his academic life. Julian would now continue studying under the masters of Neo-Platonic philosophy in western Asia Minor. Eunapius and his *Lives of the Sophist* is the best source for Julian’s travels and experiences with the philosophers. In it, Julian is addressed in the account of the philosopher-theurgist Maximus of Ephesus.

Julian first travelled to the city of Pergamum where he attempted to study under one of the greatest Neo-Platonic philosophers of the time, Aedesius. It was the fame of Aedesius that attracted Julian to Pergamum, and it is regarded by Alice Gardner as the time that Julian had made up his mind to renounce Christianity.\(^\text{120}\) Eunapius’ account tells that Aedesius the aging philosopher was overwhelmed by Julian and his “admiration and amazement for the divine qualities of his soul.”\(^\text{121}\) Aedesius, a pagan, taught a new interpretation of the philosopher Plato which had taken its roots in the previous century from the writings of Plotinus (204-270 A.D.) and his student Porphyry (233-305 A.D.).\(^\text{122}\) Porphyry continued the Neo-Platonic tradition and left an influential student of Iamblichus (250-325 A.D.) who in turn was the teacher of Aedesius.\(^\text{123}\)

\(^{120}\) Gardern, *Julian*, 60; Tougher, *Julian the Apostate*, 27.

\(^{121}\) Eunapius *Lives of the Sophist*, 474.

\(^{122}\) Stephen Williams, *Diocletian and the Roman Recovery*. (London: Routledge, 2000), 159. The philosopher Plotinus taught that the goal of man is the soul’s liberation from the lower material world of illusion and change, back to its original state of pure contemplation, union with the changeless One, the principle of Pure Being. Plotinus’ student Porphyry, took Neo-Platonism further and extended the doctrines to justify oracles and theurgy, and mix them with virtually all the beliefs of traditional cults. Iamblichus’ a student of Porphyry’s, Neo-Platonist philosophy was sprinkled with mysticism and mythology. Philosophy had changed in the fourth century under the Neo-Platonists. It was no longer confined within the pure rational pursuit of wisdom. Pagans now looked for a greater order and unity within polytheism, a process called syncretism. This is important because all the gods were not pushed out but their identities became merged and a focus was directed at a “Hidden One.” The “Summus Deus” (highest god) was suppose to be both above and behind them. The first step was taken by Emperor Aurelian (270-275) who established among the regular gods at Rome the cult of *Sol Invictus* (the Unconquerable Sun) as the Summus Deus and the protector of the Emperor and state.

\(^{123}\) Bowersock, *Julian the Apostate*, 28; Tougher, *Julian the Apostate*, 27; One can look at *theurgy* as an intellectual approach to the rites and traditions of the ancient gods. Plotinus and his student Porphyry accepted the traditional worship and rites as lesser manifestations of the “the one.”
Iamblichus was the first Neo-Platonist to push further and put an emphasis both magic and certain rituals more than reason. The famed teacher Aedesius was elderly, and although Julian tried bribing him to be accepted as a pupil, Aedesius sent Julian to seek out two of his former pupils, Chrysanthius of Sardis and Eusebius. Julian frequented their lectures and got a well-rounded education under them. Each of the instructors taught different styles of philosophy. While Eusebius taught a traditional philosophers course that only through intellectual efforts could the soul be guided to its source, his counterpart (Chrysanthius) was a follower of theurgy that stressed divination, magic, and mythic lore that was designed to help the seeker become closer with the gods. Julian, according to Eunapius, revered his instructor Eusebius but became intrigued with the other dimension of Neo-Platonism that the philosopher had rejected as fake rituals and illusions. Eusebius related a story of theurgy in dealing with another of Aedesius’ students, Maximus of Ephesus.

The philosopher Eusebius had hopes that the story he had told would turn Julian back to the classical views that Neo-Platonist studied. Instead this would have the opposite effect. Eusebius described how Maximus had animated the statue of the goddess Hekate, making her smile and laugh, and the torches she held burst into flames. Although Eusebius emphasized the wonders brought about by theurgy he claimed they were works of a madman, and that the

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124 Tougher, *Julian the Apostate*, 26-27; Bowersock, *Julian the Apostate*, 28; Browning, *The Emperor Julian*, 55; Smith, *Julian’s Gods*, 29. Although Aedesius would have been older, it would also make sense that he did not want to accept Julian as a student due to the fact that he was the cousin of the “Christian” Emperor Constantius.


greatest spiritual purification can be obtained only through reason.\textsuperscript{128} Julian, enthused said “You have shown me the man I was in search of” and departed to continue his studies in Ephesus.\textsuperscript{129}

Once in Ephesus, it was Maximus who had the largest influence on Julian and only second to Mardonius. Eunapius knew Maximus personally and wrote how he was impressive and in discussions no one ventured to contradict him.\textsuperscript{130} It is accepted that under Maximus, the prince was to finalize his turn from Christianity to paganism. Julian, who was a willing student, would date his conversion to paganism to the year 351 A.D. placing Julian around the age of twenty.\textsuperscript{131} However, Julian would not openly claim his conversion until ten years later. He was not able to do so because he did not want to draw the eye of the emperor. His cousin Constantius had made it a law in 356, that “if any persons should be proved to devote their attention to sacrifices or to worship images, they shall be subjected to capital punishment.”\textsuperscript{132}

Libanius also credits Maximus for the role that he played in the conversion of Julian and made it clear that it was through the influence of Maximus that Julian cast off the Christian beliefs and embraced the gods.\textsuperscript{133} While a student of Maximus, Julian would continue to study Iamblichus to obtain communication and unity with the One or with one of its higher manifestations.\textsuperscript{134} It was after Julian studied the Neo-Platonists that he was initiated into the cult

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{128} Eunapius \textit{Lives of the Sophist}, 475.
\item \textsuperscript{129} Eunapius \textit{Lives of the Sophist}, 475.
\item \textsuperscript{130} Eunapius \textit{Lives of the Sophist}, 473; Browning, \textit{The Emperor Julian}, 56 claims Maximus made a specialty of every kind of theurgy, divination and miracle-mongering. According to Browning, he was a half-charlatan who deceived himself before he deceived others.
\item \textsuperscript{131} Julian \textit{Letter to the Alexandrians}, 434D. The passage states “if you heed my advice, you will lead yourselves on even a little truth… heed one who travelled on that road of yours until his twentieth year, and now travelled this one with the help of the gods.”
\item \textsuperscript{132} Theodosian Code 16.10.6.
\item \textsuperscript{133} Libanius 12.34 and 13.12.
\item \textsuperscript{134} Browning, \textit{The Emperor Julian}, 57. The Neo-Platonist, had elaborated a kind of esoteric religion. Their version of the Bible was a work called the \textit{Chaldaean Oracles} that was written in the early second century by a Babylonian mystic that would later be put together by the Neo-Platonist, Iamblichus. Iamblichus put a somewhat philosophical
\end{itemize}
of the god Mithras. This became central to both Julian’s revival of paganism and a part of his own identity. Being an initiate of Mithras, Julian was eager to promote his cult. 135 Once his teacher thought it acceptable, Julian in the year 351, was initiated into the mystery cults of Hekate and Mithras, the sun god. 136 Gregory Nazianzus in his Oration Against Julian wrote as if he was a first hand witness to this initiation, “He descended into one of those sanctuaries feared by all…in company with the man that was as bad as many sanctuaries put together, the wise in such things, or sophist more rightly to be called; this kind of divination confer with darkness and subterranean demons.” 137 Julian was initiated into these cults and finally connected to his patron deity of Mithras. 138 We see this in both his Hymn to King Helios and his satire The Caesars. In The Caesars, Julian wrote, “'As for you,' Hermes said to me, ‘I have given you knowledge of

tint to this and added elements of traditional Greek religion while making it all have structure. The only thing we have that remains from this work is quotations from other sources. In the work we know that their main deity was Hekate the "witch/trickster" goddess of the underworld. Thanks to Iamblichus, Hekate had become fused with Cybele, the great mother goddess.


136 Athanassiadi, Julian, 37; Browning, The Emperor Julian, 59; Smith, Julian’s Gods, 130.

137 Gregory Orations, 4.55. Due to his hatred and anger towards Julian, this is one of the worst primary sources I have ever read. Gregory is one-sided and consistently bias in all of his writings towards Julian. Ancient sources and modern scholars agree these cults that are deemed “Mystery Cults” because they were secretive and quite about their meetings, rituals, and initiations. To add on, it is a well known fact that Gregory hated Julian so there is little doubt that both Maximus and Julian would have given Gregory a firsthand account. The only positive thing that does come out of Gregory’s writing is the possibility that someone talked and let slip that Julian had been initiated. This is doubtful because Julian constantly had to keep looking over his shoulder due to the spies that Constantius had watching him. Even though Julian was now a pagan, he would not come out as a full pagan until his march to face Constantius ten years later in 361. See Julian’s Letter to Maximus, 415C-D.

138 We owe much of our knowledge of Mithras and the coined term “Mystery Cults” to Franz Cumont and his study of Mithraism. Franz Cumont, The Mysteries of Mithra, Trans. Thomas J. McCormack (1903; Reprint New York, 1956). Mithras was a Persian god of light often associated with the sun god Helios. His story goes back before the Zoroastrian religion of Persia. He was born from a rock on December 25th while shepherds were gathered around and gave all plant and animal life from the blood of a bull that he killed. Julian saw Mithras and Helios as one and the same. Mithraism held their meetings underground, held a high standard of moral behavior, and encouraged brotherhood. The birth story of Mithra, the taurobolium, a Mithraic baptism, Mithraic “holy communion”, and the second coming of Mithra were all beliefs that the followers held sacred. Stephen Williams, Diocletian and the Roman Recovery, (London: Routledge, 2000), 158. The Persian cult of the hero-savior Mithras, was extremely popular in the later Roman armies. It included such ordeals as branding, fasting and scourging. There were seven grades of initiate corresponding to the seven planetary spheres, and the main mystery enacted the journey of man’s immortal soul through life, at the seven stages of which he is given knowledge, and the chance to shed, one by one the vices of anger (Mars), sloth (Saturn), greed (Mercury), lust (Venus), ambition (Jupiter) and so on.
your father Mithras. You must keep his injunctions, and so procure for yourself an anchorage for your life, when you must depart, you can with good hope choose him as your guardian god.”

Maximus and the teachings that he imparted to Julian would be so influential to Julian that he would write to Maximus when he came out to the empire as a full pagan. When Julian became emperor, Maximus would later be included in his inner circles, continue to instruct the emperor, accompany Julian on the campaign against the Persians and finally be at Julian’s side when he was on his deathbed.

Gallus was recalled to the court of Milan and executed in late 354 on charges of treason. With the downfall of Gallus, Julian was not spared and due to association, also summoned to Milan in 354. Julian found an unlikely ally in the empress Eusebia and through her intervention his seven-month detainment at Comum (north of Milan) was concluded. Julian was sent to continue his studies in Athens. It was in the city of Athens that Julian wrote it “had long been my dearest wish…for we who dwell in Thrace and Ionia are the sons of Hellas and long to greet our ancestors and embrace the soil of Hellas.”

Julian continued his studies under the Christian, Prohaeresius and the pagan, Himerius of Prusa. Julian befriended Basil of Caesarea, the Christian whom he later invited to his court asking for his services. Julian wrote “I dispatched this letter to you to convince you, wise man

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139 Julian The Casesars, 335C-336C.
140 Julian Letter to Maximus, 415C-D. Julian wrote “I worship the gods openly, and the greater part of the army returning with me is devout. I sacrifice openly.”
141 Ammianus Marcellinus 14.11. 19-23. I discuss more details on Gallus in the following chapter.
142 Julian Panegyric in Honor of the Empress Eusebia, 118C; Ammianus Marcellinus 15.2.7; 15.8.3; Bowersock, Julian the Apostate, 30. See Athanassiadi, Julian, 45-46 on Julian’s seclusion in Comum/Como.
143 Julian Panegyric in Honor of the Empress Eusebia, 118D.
144 Browning, The Emperor Julian, 64. Tougher, Julian the Apostate, 18. Julian wrote a Letter to Prohaeresius and later exempted him from his teaching edict.
that you are, that you is serviceable to me…”\textsuperscript{145} Although Julian was always able to make friends wherever his travels and exiles took him, it was in Athens that he came in contact with his non-related arch nemesis, Gregory of Nazianzus. Both men attended the lectures of Prohaeresius and Himerius but for obvious reasons ran in different circles.\textsuperscript{146} Julian became close friends with Priscus, another former pupil of Aedesius. Priscus would continue to instruct Julian in his theurgic studies and like Maximus, became one of Julian’s councilors, travel companion during the Persian expedition, and was with him at his death.\textsuperscript{147} It was during his brief stay at Athens that Julian traveled to Eleusis and was initiated in another of the mystery cults, the Eleusinian mysteries.\textsuperscript{148} The Eleusinian Mysteries is another term for the cult of Demeter and Persephone. This is one of the oldest and most popular mystery cults of ancient times. This cult was based on agrarian principles and dated back to the Mycenaeans. Being one of the top three mystery cults in the ancient world next to the cult of Mithras and the cult of Cybele, it would be a high honor to be an initiate.

Despite having a different view Julian had to conceal his religious transformation from the world.\textsuperscript{149} Libanius writes that there were pagan intellectuals who knew of Julian’s conversion and had hopes of his ascendance.\textsuperscript{150} I believe that leading up to this point, Julian’s teachers, education, and experiences are what led to a progression in his devotion to Hellenic culture and a reaction against his experiences at the hands of Christians. Julian needed to be accepted. In the

\textsuperscript{145} Julian Letter to Basil, 381-382.
\textsuperscript{146} Sozomen cited in Bowersock, Julian the Apostate, 29-30.
\textsuperscript{147} Smith, Julian’s Gods, 30.
\textsuperscript{149} Libanius 18.19.
\textsuperscript{150} Libanius 13.13-14; Bowersock, Julian the Apsotate, 30.
Neo-Platonist philosophers, with their love for the Greek past, their secret rituals, their ideas that all traditional religions had ways to the attainment of “Truth,” Julian found such a group. Even though Julian was happy enough living and retiring in the city of Athens, he again had his life interrupted by the emperor Constantius. His stay in the city of Athens was only several months. Julian was recalled again in 354 and ordered to live in the imperial palace where he wrote: “I submitted and...consented to dwell under the same roof with those whom I knew to have ruined my whole family and who, I suspected, would plot against myself also.”\(^{151}\) In 355, with Constantius having killed off most of his kin and through the influence of the empress Eusebia,\(^{152}\) Constantius elevated Julian to the rank of Caesar.

\(^{151}\) Julian *Letter to the Athenians*, 277C.

\(^{152}\) Zosimus 3.1.2 claims that it was only through the influence of Eusebia that Constantius elevated Julian. However, both Julian *Panegyric in Honor of the Empress Eusebia*, 121B-C and Ammianus Marcellinus 15.8.3 describe her as an influence and not the sole instigator.
CHAPTER 3
JULIAN AS CAESAR IN GAUL: LEARNING TO RULE

Julian, along with his half-brother Gallus, was often imprisoned throughout their youth as discussed in the previous chapter. Julian was exiled to Nicomedia, during which time Constantius elevated Gallus to the rank of Caesar in 351 AD.\(^{153}\) While Julian was studying Neo-Platonic philosophy, Gallus was charged with defending the Eastern-most portion of the empire from Persian hostilities.\(^{154}\) Constantius also gave Gallus the hand of his widowed sister, Constantina, in marriage and sent both of them to rule in Antioch. Here they would remain from 351-354 A.D.\(^{155}\) Socrates tells us that “Gallus arrived in Antioch on May 7th 351 A.D. and was greeted with an appearance of a cross in the sky.”\(^{156}\)

To state that Gallus was an unpopular ruler in Antioch would be a gross understatement. According to Ammianus, it was not long before Gallus and his wife Constantina were experts in doing harm.\(^{157}\) Gallus was known to be extremely hot-tempered in his governance of the region and condemned many to death or exile based on slim evidence.\(^{158}\) Libanius and Ammianus were both natives of Antioch and left us firsthand accounts of the reign of Gallus. Ammianus claimed that individuals were sentenced to death on false evidence and for the smallest of reasons, while

\(^{153}\) Libanius 18. 13; Bowersock, *Julian the Apostate*, 27-28. ; Head, *The Emperor Julian*, 35. ; “Caesar” the title was originally derived from the first imperial family but since the reign of Diocletian( 284-305 A.D.) the concept of the caesarship was second rank to only the emperor. He was granted extensive responsibilities and acted like a ruler-heir in training.

\(^{154}\) G.W. Bowersock, *Julian the Apostate*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1978), 28; During this time Constantius was dealing with usurpers and uprisings in the West leaving the eastern flank exposed to possible rough talk by the Persians. With both his brothers now dead Constantius needed someone to represent power there.

\(^{155}\) Zosimus 11.60.

\(^{156}\) Socrates 2.28.2.

\(^{157}\) Ammianus Marcellinus 14.1.2.

many others lost their properties and were driven into exile.\textsuperscript{159} The residents of the city would often riot and Gallus had little or no training in governing public affairs.\textsuperscript{160} Although the reason for his appointment as Caesar was to keep order in the region, Gallus had very little power to carry out the task to which he had been assigned. Given the position of Caesar, Gallus was expected to be the personal representative of the emperor and not someone exercising power on his own behalf. Gallus was charged with keeping the eastern part of the empire occupied while Constantius, and the bulk of the Roman army, marched to face the usurper Magnentius.

In his position Gallus had little control over the Praetorian Prefect who would ultimately provide his armies with food and equipment.\textsuperscript{161} Officers who answered only to Constantius surrounded Gallus. This was because civil and military authority had been divided in the empire since the reign of Diocletian (284-305 A.D.). Gallus continuously over-stepped his boundaries of power and Constantius took this as an affront to his authority. After Constantius defeated Magnentius in 353 at the Battle of Mons Seleucus (in southern France), Magnentius committed suicide in early August 353.\textsuperscript{162} Now that Magnentius was out of the picture, Constantius turned his focus towards his cousin. Gallus was recalled to Milan where he knew he would be deposed and executed. Gallus appealed to his Roman soldiers to execute Praetorian Prefect Domitianus, the man charged with his arrest. Finally, Gallus obeyed the orders and while on his way he stopped and presided over chariot races in Constantinople. Constantius was convinced that Gallus was trying to gain popular support and usurp his throne.\textsuperscript{163} Constantius had him arrested,

\textsuperscript{159} Most of Ammianus’ Book 14 is focused on Gallus and his reign. Especially see sections 1, 6, 7, and 9. Eutropius (350-370 A.D.) who was an imperial secretary claimed: “Gallus was a naturally a cruel man and excessively inclined to tyranny.” Eutropius. \textit{Eutropius: Breviarium}, (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1993) 10.13.

\textsuperscript{160} Browning, \textit{The Emperor Julian}, 60.

\textsuperscript{161} Browning, \textit{The Emperor Julian}, 60.

\textsuperscript{162} Eutropius 10.12.

\textsuperscript{163} Browning, \textit{The Emperor Julian}, 62.
removed him from his position as Caesar, and stripped him of all official regalia. While Gallus tried to claim that Constantina was to blame for all the trouble, this only angered Constantius more and he ordered Gallus’ execution. Gallus, at the age of 28, was pronounced a traitor and with little more than a summary hearing beheaded.\textsuperscript{164} To Julian, this would have been an incident that would bring back a bitter reminder of his youth and what had happened to his family. Julian never claimed that his half-brother was a just and noble ruler but instead wrote “Fate was unkind to him.”\textsuperscript{165} Julian believed that Gallus was a victim of false accusations and was upset with the outcome of the one-sided trial. “My Brother was ill-starred above all men who have ever yet lived … Surely he deserved to live, even if he seemed unfit to govern.”\textsuperscript{166} Julian was soon arrested by agents of Constantius and was placed in Como (Comum) while he awaited trial. Like his half-brother and family before him, Julian felt that he was going to meet the same fate under Constantius’ orders.\textsuperscript{167}

The removal of Gallus from the position of Caesar did not alleviate the problems encountered by Constantius in the Eastern frontier. Constantius soon appointed Claudius Silvanus the Master of Infantry (\textit{Magister Peditum}) to fix the problems created in Gaul and end the barbarian raids, which had continued under Gallus.\textsuperscript{168} This temporary fix was soon declared emperor in August 355 by his independent army but he was promptly killed by the agents of


\textsuperscript{165} Julian \textit{Letter to the Athenians}, 271D-272C.

\textsuperscript{166} Julian \textit{Letter to the Athenians}, 271D.

\textsuperscript{167} Julian \textit{Letter to the Athenians}, 273.

Constantius to avoid a civil war.\textsuperscript{169} The treason of Claudius Silvanus made Constantius unwilling to trust any of his military commanders and the situation in Gaul had deteriorated greatly.\textsuperscript{170} With Gallus dead, Julian was the emperor’s closest male relative and, having devoted much of his life to study and having shown very little ambition with respect to imperial power, was unlikely to be a threat to his authority.\textsuperscript{171} Julian spent seven months “surrounded by armed guards, grim of face and harsh of tongue that imprisonment seemed a mere trifle in comparison.”\textsuperscript{172} Julian claimed that it was during this time “I submitted and…consented to dwell under the same roof with those whom I knew to have ruined my whole family and who, I suspected, would before long plot against myself also.”\textsuperscript{173}

Although he needed a figurehead in Gaul, Constantius was increasingly paranoid due to the past two failures that had occupied the position of Caesar. One theory, which is reflected by Julian’s letter surrounding his first years as Caesar, was that Constantius never wanted Julian to have any actual authority in the region and merely wanted him to serve as a representative of imperial power in the region.\textsuperscript{174} Julian was allowed to bring only a small number of his own servants to court with him; considering the manner in which Constantius had dealt with other members of his family, Julian had reasons to expect treachery at the hands of the emperor.\textsuperscript{175} The Roman empress Eusebia in the years 354-355 emerged as the savior and advocate of her (still in

\textsuperscript{169} Goldsworthy, \textit{In the Name of Rome}, 384; Browning, \textit{The Emperor Julian}, 68.
\textsuperscript{170} Browning, \textit{The Emperor Julian}, 69.
\textsuperscript{171} Bowersock, \textit{Julian the Apostate}, 33; Browning, \textit{The Emperor Julian}, 70.
\textsuperscript{172} Libanius 18.25. During his “house arrest again” Julian knew that he had enemies in the administration of Constantius. He knew that some hated Gallus and now was hated by the family association. The grand chamberlain Eusebius was Constantius’ most trusted advisor and one of Julian’s biggest enemies. Ammianus 18.4.3 (The name Eusebius, was one of the most popular names in the fourth century which made it difficult to keep the several Eusebius in order).
\textsuperscript{173} Julian \textit{Letter to the Athenians}, 275.
\textsuperscript{174} Bowersock, \textit{Julian the Apostate}, 34.
\textsuperscript{175} Julian \textit{Letter to the Athenians}, 277D.
the closet) pagan in-law. Eusebia, the wife of Constantius, was ultimately able to influence her husband to give Julian a legitimate shot at imperial power. Constantius, in order to solidify the bond between the two, gave Julian the hand of his sister Helena in marriage along with a detachment of approximately three hundred and sixty soldiers to act as his bodyguards. This is interesting because the emperor himself had never received Julian at court. This has been overlooked but would be important because throughout his reign Constantius chose to only see his cousin Julian one other time besides this. The first time Constantius met his cousin was during his one trip to see Julian and Gallus at Macellum. In a hurry to resolve the constant problems in Gaul, Constantius elevated Julian at the age of 24, to the position of Caesar on 6th November of 355. Dressed in purple and presented to the cheering soldiers, Julian was supposedly heard quoting *The Iliad* saying “By purple death I’m seized and fate supreme.” Most modern scholars brush past this time period but it is important and fundamental in formulating how Julian became a military commander and a successful ruler.

Constantius dispatched Julian, the newly appointed Caesar, to Gaul on December 1st with only three hundred and sixty men to accompany him. Julian wrote that he was “not to be commander of the army there but a subordinate of the generals and that he (Constantius)

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177 Julian *Letter to the Athenians*, 277D; Browning, *The Emperor Julian*, 74-75; Goldsworthy, *In the Name of Rome*, 384.

178 Browning, *The Emperor Julian*, 70.


181 Ammianus Marcellinus 15.8.18, Julian quoting *The Iliad*, 5.83.

182 See Appendix B Figure B.5 for map of Gaul.
permitted me to carry about his dress and image.” Julian was less than pleased with the men that Constantius assigned to be his bodyguard, a troop of Christians who “knew only how to pray.” Julian, even though second in rank under the emperor, was not in control of the Roman armies in Gaul. The armies were under the control of two generals, Ursicinus and Marcellus. Julian was wary that they had been ordered “to watch me as vigilantly as they did the enemy.” When the young Caesar crossed over the border and arrived in Gaul, he found that the situation there was far worse than what he had been told. The frontier was lost and the Roman armies had been driven from the territories they were suppose to be defending. Besides finding out that the barbarians made regular raids into the Roman territories Julian was to learn that Cologne (Colonia Agrippinensis), the largest Roman city and military base in lower Germany, had been obliterated by barbarians after a long siege. Upon hearing the news that the barbarians had taken one of Rome’s largest cities, Ammianus wrote, “all that he had achieved by his elevation was the prospect of perishing with more work on his hands.”

In support of the theory that Julian was intended to fail are the letters written by Julian himself which openly assert that Constantius intended him to be little more than a figurehead and that the emperor had appointed numerous agents to spy on Julian for signs of revolt. Additional support for this theory is that Julian was not actually in command of any of the armies at Gaul, which were instead trusted to generals appointed by the emperor. Julian would not gain

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183 Julian Letter to the Athenians, 277D-278B.
184 Julian The Shorter Fragments No. 5, 299; see also Zosimus 3.3.
185 Julian Letter to the Athenians, 277D.
186 Ammianus Marcellinus 15.8.18. See Appendix B Figure B.6 for Map of Gaul.
187 Ammianus Marcellinus 15.8.19.
188 Julian Letter to the Athenians, 277D.
a position of power until Constantius gave him the leadership of the army in the spring of 357.\textsuperscript{189} Julian, like his half-brother Gallus, had never held any public position or had any training and experience in dealing with military matters. The new Caesar had spent his youth imprisoned and living an academic life studying at Nicomedia and Athens. Julian actually embraced his position. Although he had spent a great deal of his life studying philosophy, Julian began studying the written works of Julius Caesar and Plutarch in preparation for his assignment.\textsuperscript{190} Julian would also practice daily with a sword and a shield throughout the winter of 355-356 and added military tactics and strategy to his study regime.\textsuperscript{191} Approximately two months after his appointment of Caesar, Julian became a \textit{consul} for the first time with Constantius as his colleague.\textsuperscript{192}

Julian knew that the good graces of the emperor could be fickle and immediately went to work upon his arrival in Gaul by recruiting volunteer troops from among the citizenry.\textsuperscript{193} Julian spent time during the winter conducting drills and parades with Roman soldiers and creating political allies in the region.\textsuperscript{194} Julian knew of the Alamanni and how they were a tribe that was known for their warriors and raids.\textsuperscript{195} He certainly knew that barbarian attacks would commence when summer arrived and that he would be required not only to deal with them effectively, but also in a manner that would not arise any undue suspicions from the emperor.\textsuperscript{196} Aside from his

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{189} Julian \textit{Letter to the Athenians}, 278D-279B.
  \item \textsuperscript{190} Bowersock, \textit{Julian the Apostate}, 36.
  \item \textsuperscript{191} Ammianus Marcellinus 16.5. 4-8.
  \item \textsuperscript{192} Ammianus Marcellinus 16.1.1; Bowersock, \textit{Julian the Apostate}, 37. This action Julian did was an act which I believe was a purely symbolic gesture
  \item \textsuperscript{193} Zosimus 3.3.
  \item \textsuperscript{194} Browning, \textit{The Emperor Julian}, 77.
  \item \textsuperscript{195} John F. Drinkwater, \textit{The Alamanni and Rome (213-496)}, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 121.
  \item \textsuperscript{196} Browning, \textit{The Emperor Julian}, 80-81.
\end{itemize}
preparations for what would undoubtedly be his first real test as Caesar of the region, little else is known about what occurred until June of 356.197

Julian’s first year as Caesar was widely regarded as a major success. In June of that year he learned that Autun (Augustodunum) had been attacked by barbarians and immediately undertook a campaign to retake the city that met with success by the end of that month.198 One of his more interesting strategies was to offer a bounty to his soldiers who killed barbarians. The result of this savagery by his soldiers against the hordes quickly became legendary and, although it was a relatively minor victory, had the effect of raising the morale of his soldiers, as well as their faith in him as their commander.199

Following his victory at Autun (356), Julian continued to have a strong summer of victories against the Alamanni. Although the barbarians occupied Roman cities along the Rhine from Strasbourg (Argentorate) to Mainz (Morgontiacum), Julian continued to lead his army victoriously throughout a number of skirmishes which climaxed with a battle at Brumath (Brocomagus) and retaking the city of Cologne.200 Julian successfully negotiated a truce with some of the Germanic kings and spent much of the remainder of 356 involved in an ambitious campaign against barbarian tribes along the lower Rhine (after first installing a garrison to defend Cologne).201 Julian took up residence in Sens (Senones), (Oppidum Senonas) for the winter months of 356 stating, “There I was exposed to utmost danger…I was quartered apart

197 Bowersock, Julian the Apostate, 37.
199 Murdoch, The Last Pagan, 49; Libanius 18.45 relates the method of firing up troops and putting a price on enemies heads.
200 Ammianus Marcellinus 16.2.12; Libanius 18.46.
201 Bowersock, Julian the Apostate, 38-39.
with only a few soldiers.” Julian was able to defeat the barbarians without the help of Marcellus, who refused to assist him despite the fact that he was in a position to do so.

Julian’s first year in power is of particular importance for two other reasons. First and foremost, it demonstrated a lack of tension between him and the emperor and their ability to work together. One such example of this is, while Julian’s armies attacked the Alamanni on the left bank of the Rhine, the armies of Constantius marched through Switzerland in the south to cut off the enemy from the other side. It is also demonstrated that Marcellus was promptly fired after word reached the emperor that he had failed to come to Julian’s aid during the siege of Sens. Of possibly greater significance was the manner in which his military victories created an army that was increasingly loyal to him. In addition to his numerous victories throughout the year, Julian was reported to have worked day and night with his subordinates during the siege of Sen and to have shared in their hardships during a time in which food was scarce. Julian lived with his soldiers among the bulwarks and battlements. Julian’s willingness to share in the hardships, provided inspiration to his troops and showed characteristics of an unexpected leader.

In the following year 357 Julian saw the most celebrated of his military successes. Constantius replaced the disgraced Marcellus as magister equitum (Master of Cavalry) with an excellent general by the name of Severus. Julian’s victories during the previous year had

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202 Julian Letter to the Athenians, 278.
204 Bowersock, Julian the Apostate, 38.
205 Ammianus Marcellinus 16.7.1; Libanius 18.48.
206 Ammianus Marcellinus 16.4.2-5; Gregory of Nazianzus Oration, 4.71. Presents a rare compliment on how Julian lived as a regular soldier and provided them with good personal leadership.
207 David S.Potter, The Roman Empire at Bay AD 180-395, (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), 501; Ammianus 16.11.1 stresses the importance and quality of Severus.
proven Julian a capable commander not only for the emperor but also to his men. In an effort to stop barbarian invasions, a plan was developed in which Julian and Severus would march along the Rhine to Strasbourg while another commander, Barbatio, would march north toward Basel. Unfortunately, Barbatio was an incredibly incompetent commander and refused to provide any help to Julian’s efforts. Libanius and Ammianus both claim that Barbatio was working under orders from the Emperor. Barbatio was easily routed and forced to retreat to his camp at Augst (Augusta Rauracorum) and then on to Milan (Mediolanum). The Alamanni, led by King Chnodomar, allied with six other tribes and turned towards attacking Julian and Severus at Strasbourg. Vadomarius, another Alamannic (rex) ‘king,’ joined the other Alamanni to fight Julian at the battle of Strasbourg.

The Battle of Strasbourg (Battle of Argentoratum) in 357 was the most important of Julian’s military successes during his time as Caesar in Gaul. The battle saw Roman forces outnumbered nearly three-to-one, but Julian and Severus had the tactical sense to ensure that they would have the high ground above the banks of the Rhine. The Alamanni were physically stronger and swifter but the Romans achieved victory because of their defensive armor, their

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208 Bowersock, Julian the Apostate, 40.
209 Browning, The Emperor Julian, 84-85.
210 Murdoch, The Last Pagan, 54; The infantry commander Barbatio that was appointed by Constantius seems to have done more wrong than right in regards to helping Julian and the Romans. Julian, along with his soldiers began to think that he was an agent of Constantius that was trying to sabotage the war efforts. He let the Laeti tribe escape after they were caught in an ambush. A.M. 16.11.3-6; Julian requested seven boats and supplies that Barbatio had and Barbatio in turn-set fire to his entire fleet and reported that he was unable to send support. A.M. 16.11.8; In early 357,a large amount of much needed food supplies reached Barbatio's camp which he set aside for his men and the supplies that were supposed to be forwarded to Julian and his troops he ordered to be torched. A.M. 16.11.12.
211 Ammianus Marcellinus 16.11.12; Libanius 12.42-43.
213 Ammianus Marcellinus 16.12.2.
214 David Woods, ‘Ammianus Marcellinus and the “Rex Alamannorum” Vadomarius,’ Mnemosyne 53. 6 (2000): 693. Vadomarius was a king of a single canton or section of the Brisigavi that lived along the Rhine River. Vadomarius will be a constant problem for not only Julian but later Ammianus Marcellinus and Libanius.
215 See Appendix B Figure B.7 For detailed map of the Battle of Strasbourg.
close formation behind a wall of shields, and their ability both to stand their ground and rally when broken. With superior training, and positioning, Julian was able to rout the Alamanni and their allies. Julian’s troops were able to use their perfected traditional style by forming a wall of interlocked shields that recalled the othismos, or push, of the Greek phalanx. Ammianus, himself a soldier there, refers to this formation as a testudo (tortoise). This allowed the Roman army to drive the numerically superior German forces into the river as they retreated. The Roman losses were exactly two hundred and forty seven including four officers while the estimates of slain Germans were at six thousand. By the end of the day the Romans had fought and ended the Alamanni attacks into Roman towns and captured the barbarian King Chnodomar, Julian spared his life and sent him to Constantius for confinement in Rome. The victory was bittersweet due to the fact that it raised Julian in stature only to increase his cousin’s jealousy. Julian who sent the famed Chnodomar to Constantius lost credit for the victory taken away from him. Constantius, while safely at his court, took full credit for the defeat of the barbarians.

When this battle was fought near Strasbourg, from which he [Constantius] was forty days’ march away, his account of the action stated that he had drawn up the order of battle, taken his place by the standards, put the barbarians to flight, and had Chnodomar brought before him. Disgraceful to relate, he said nothing of the glorious exploits of Julian, which he would have utterly in oblivion; but common report forbids the suppression great achievements, however many people try to keep them in the shade.

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217 J. E. Lendon, Soldiers & Ghost: A History of Battle in Classical Antiquity, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 262-263. It is important to note that the new Roman shield was oval and smaller than the older legionary scutum because the soldier fought close to their fellow soldiers. The men in the front would now carry the long sword, the spatha, which by this time mostly replaced the gladius. The soldiers especially carried the hasta (stabbing spear).
218 Bowersock, Julian the Apostate, 41-42.
219 Ammiannus Marcellinus 16.12.63; Libanius 18.60 claims that there were eight thousand dead barbarians.
220 Ammianus Marcellinus 16.12.65-66; Libanius 18.61-62; Julian Letter to the Athenians, 279D.
221 Julian Letter to the Athenians, 279B.
With Julian accomplishing more than he was expected to in Gaul and Constantius having difficult times dealing with Shapur II, the jealously of the emperor started to get in the way of the his cousin who was becoming a military leader to be reckoned with.\textsuperscript{223}

Although the Battle of Strasbourg was the most important of his military victories, Julian continued to impress through the end of 359. Julian would launch strikes across the Rhine against the Alamanni, the Salii and Chamavi, which were designed to force the tribes to seek terms of peace from Rome.\textsuperscript{224} One of the largest problems Julian had as Caesar was procuring sufficient supplies for the troops tasked with fighting off the barbarian invaders. To deal with this task, he commissioned a fleet of ships to transport grain from Britain to the European mainland. Most of his military responsibilities during these years consisted of efforts to hold the entirety of the Rhine River to ensure his supplies.\textsuperscript{225} In 358 he again crossed the Rhine to receive the surrender of Hortarius (a barbarian chief) and turned northern Gaul back into a center of Roman domination.\textsuperscript{226} The following year, saw an increased focus on his civil administration of the territory.

Although Julian’s position was that of a military commander rather than a civil administrator, he found that by 359 these offices could not be completely separated. One of his greatest civil achievements was in the area of taxation. Taxes on the citizens of Gaul were not collected with any degree of consistency and the tax rates were based on information that was

\textsuperscript{223} King Shapur II was king of the Sassanid Empire. He is given the title “the Great” because his reign 309-379 saw the Persian empire better off than it ever had been. Shapur defeated the Romans under Constantius II, Julian, and Jovian forcing them to sign a one-sided treaty. Under Shapur, the Avesta (the sacred texts of Zoroastrianism) was completed.
\textsuperscript{224} Ammianus Marcellinus 18.2.1, 17.1-2, 17.8, 17.10.
\textsuperscript{225} Julian Letter to the Athenians, 279D-280; Libanius 18.83.
\textsuperscript{226} Bowersock, Julian the Apostate, 42-43.
Rather than increase taxes on the Roman citizenry, Julian took the approach of ensuring that all the taxes levied were actually collected. In the past, the rich citizens would attempt to bribe the tax collectors themselves to avoid paying what was owed. Julian put an immediate end to this practice, and as a result, the tax flow into his administration was so abundant that he was actually able to reduce taxes over the next several years. Another notable civil achievement was Julian’s active participation in the trial of cases brought before him so as to ensure that the rich would not be treated with impunity and that the punishments meted out to convicted offenders were just.

Julian’s progressive social policy in the matter of taxation was not without its costs. His plans for reform depended on his dealings with Florentius, the praetorian prefect, who was a civil administrator who oversaw the taxation of the province. As an appointee of Constantius, Florentius’ answer to the problems of barbarians attacking shipments of grain from Britain was to pay a bribe to the barbarian kings – an act that Julian thought to be disgraceful. Julian built a fleet to secure shipments and launched attacks on tribes that harassed shipments. Florentius also sought to raise taxes rather than to ensure that those already in place were collected properly. Julian would go around him by charging the people a reasonable amount and actually collecting it. Julian abolished the supplementary taxes and the whole system of collection was redone.

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228 Ammianus Marcellinus 17.3.6
230 Julian *Letter to the Athenians*, 279D.
231 Ammianus Marcellinus 17.3.5.
232 Ammianus Marcellinus 17.3.6.
While Julian was stationed in the province he used the army for not only taking back Roman towns and, implementing his tax reforms but also for successful rebuilding projects.

Julian undertook this significant project in rebuilding the recaptured towns and restoring them to their former glory. The Roman official, Claudius Mamertinus, who held the consulship in 362 and was to be later governor of Africa, Illyria and Italy tells of Julian and his actions and building projects.

Julian conquered the Alamanni, Julian raised the cities of Gaul from dust and ashes. These provinces which were conquered, occupied, laid waste by fire and the sword are now more prosperous than our towns which have never known enemy invasion and which are in the hands of Constantius. Julian passed all his summer in campaign, his winters in administration. In this way he divided the year into two parts; in the one he tamed the barbarians, in the other he restored the rule of law to the citizens, for he has declared a continuing war against both the enemy and corruption.233

This is a policy that was carried out in his reign as both Caesar and Augustus. Julian gained the province back from the barbarians it was under and restored the cities that had been captured.

Ammianus tells of the character and reputation that Julian had gained while he was in the province:

By a series of rapid steps he attained such distinction both at home and abroad that in sagacity he was reckoned the reincarnation of Titus the son of Vespasian, in the glorious outcomes of his campaigns very like Trajan, as merciful as Antoninus, and in his striving after truth and perfection the equal of Marcus Aurelius, on whom he endeavored to model his own actions and character.234

By the end of 359, Julian’s administration in Gaul had done more than just stabilize the region: it had given him the experiences and education befitting an emperor. It is clear to see this with how Julian was able to focus and study the military careers of Julius Caesar and Marcus Aurelius. He

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233 Claudius Mamertinus The Emperor Julian: Panegyric and Polemic, Translated by Marna M.Morgan (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1989), 1.3.2.

234 Ammianus Marcellinus 16.1.3.
was able to become a better soldier by his military drills and training. It is crucial to mention that by leading by example, Julian was able to gain the loyalty and respect of his troops.

While Julian’s administration of Gaul was considered to be a success by all accounts, Constantius was having substantial difficulty repelling the Persians in the east. Constantius devised a plan to mobilize a massive army to fight the forces of King Sapor II of Persia. Some of the plan concluded that Julian had no need for such a large number of troops in Gaul (now that he had pacified the region). Constantius sent Decentius, his tribune, to claim Julian’s auxiliary legions (the Heruli, Batavi, Celts and Petulantes) as well as 300 men of the remaining units of Julian’s army to assist with the Persian campaign in the east. Due to complaints by his Petulantes that they were “being driven off to the ends of the earth like condemned criminals while our nearest are again to become slaves of the Alamanni.” Julian protested against this on behalf of his men because many had enlisted with the assurance that they would not be transferred away from Gaul. This threat of being removed from their provinces and forced to fight in distant places that caused Julian’s army to revolt and proclaim him emperor in Gaul. In January of 360, a riot broke out in front of a palace in which the troops seized by Constantius declared Julian as their sole emperor. After attempting to reject the crown and having the soldiers refusal, Julian reluctantly accepted the title bestowed upon him by his soldiers. Julian

235 Ammianus Marcellinus 20.4.1; Libanius 18.90-93; Zosimus 3.8.

236 Ammianus Marcellinus 20.4.2. The removal was estimated to be two-thirds of Julian’s forces Bowersock, Julian the Apostate, 46.

237 Ammianus Marcellinus 20.4.9.

238 Ammianus Marcellinus 20.4.4. This was a long standing agreement that some of the these “barbarian” tribes would fight for Rome and give men in exchange for only having to fight in their provinces. See The Late Roman Army by Pat Southern and Karen Dixon. Chapter 3 gives a detailed description of the “Barbarization of the Army.”

239 Bowersock, Julian the Apostate, 47; Pat Southern, The Late Roman Army, (New Haven: Yale University Press,1996), 44; Ammianus 20.4.8. Tells that with Julian’s accession to the Purple in 360, Julian donated the amount of five solidi (gold coins) and one pound of silver to his troops.
braced for what he knew would likely be a swift and furious aftermath from Constantius. Two writers: Socrates and Sozomen, claim that Julian, in front of his troops proclaimed himself Augustus and later never sent any letters of negotiations to his cousin. They claim that Julian chose to take up arms against the Emperor and spark a civil war. In regards to the letters, Julian tells us the names of the two men whom he entrusted the letters, Pentadius the court marshal and Eutherius the head chamberlain.

Julian knew that the best possible outcome for him would be to strike a deal with the emperor while he was dealing with the Persian threat to the east. Unlikely to win in an all-out struggle for power against Constantius, Julian sought peace with his cousin in hopes that there would be a division of imperial power. Julian sent several letters to Constantius deferring to the emperor and even offered to retain only the title of Caesar. In Julian’s Letter to the Athenians he tried to declare his loyalty to Constantius and his innocence claiming it was the work of the gods: “I prayed to Zeus...I begged the god to give me a sign and then he showed me and commanded me to submit and not oppose the desire of the army.” Julian placed himself under the Emperor by offering to help Constantius by sending as many troops as he could afford. Julian, however, refused to send the troops from the other side of the Rhine due to the original

240 Ammianus Marcellinus 20.4.15; Libanius 18.99; Julian Letter to the Athenians, 284D; Eutropius 10.16; Ammianus who was a first hand witness to Julian’s ascending to the throne says “Caesar was compelled to consent.” Ammianus Marcellinus 20.4.7. In several of his orations, Libanius tells the action of Julian’s Emperorship was an instance of the gods acting through soldiers to fulfillment of a divine plan. Libanius 13.24; 12.60.

241 Ammianus Marcellinus 20.8.19.

242 Browining, The Emperor Julian, 105-106; Julian Letter to the Athenians, 285D; This would not be new due to the fact that Constantius had ruled the empire with his two brothers, Constans and Constantine II.

243 Julian Letter to the Athenians, 286C

244 Julian Letter to the Athenians, 284C
arrangement that they had in place. Julian’s friend Libanius wrote about the incident and the jealousy of Constantius:

Yet by your overwhelming victory over the enemy, you caused distress not merely to the vanquished but to him who conquered by your agency. Such an intractable disease is envy, where the person helped hates the helper’s power. At that very time, long nurtured against our Emperor here, it sprang up and fanned the spark into flame. First of all, he stripped him of his friends, to harm him in his counsels; but he remained as full of good counsel as before. Then he stripped him of a large part of his forces, to weaken him; but he remained no less strong. Then he called for his whole force, putting forward the pretext of operations against Persia under these most specious terms betraying both the Emperor and the cities.

Julian claimed that the actions he followed were overall beneficial to the emperor and the Empire and to follow Constantius’ initial orders would harm the newly secured province. Julian’s success in Gaul against the barbarian tribes would only be temporary if Constantius removed his seasoned veterans and sent them to the eastern front. Removing troops would also allow an open window for violence from the tribes across the Rhine. The negotiations continued throughout 360 without any formal settlement being made between the two cousins although there was clearly a split in the empire with respect to who should rightly bear the title of Augustus. Both Julian and his cousin were not ready to concede to the wishes of the other.

It was not until early winter that Julian realized there could be no peace with Constantius. “The Die was cast” when Julian found out the emperor bribed barbarian tribes to attack his troops. The emperor was employing the same tactics that he had used with the previous usurpers, Magnentius and Silvanius. Julian captured another Alamanni rex, Vadomarius, who told the

245 Ammianus Marcellinus 20.8.12.
246 Libanius 12.57-58.
247 Ammianus Marcellinus 20.8.13; Some historians share entirely different views in regarding as to why Constantius would break the treaties they had with the tribes to recall two-thirds of Julian’s troops to fight in the East. Athanassiadi, Julian, 70-75 follows Ammianus and Libanius, to claim that Constantius’ request was hostile while others such as G. W. Bowersock, Julian the Apostate, 46-52 say that it was both the improved conditions of the province and the situation out East was in dire need of troops.
Caesar that Constantius had incited the attacks. Later, Claudius Mamertinus backed these claims saying that Constantius had roused the whole barbarian world (cunctam barbarium) to arms against Julian and had incited tribes (gentes) to attack him. With war becoming inevitable, Julian was faced with the option of remaining in Gaul (where he would be more powerful) or risk an invasion of Italy and Illyricum. Ultimately, Julian decided that he would take approximately 23,000 troops he could spare from Gaul and march against the emperor. His strategy was to divide his forces under his generals Nevitta and Jovinus as they moved to the east to give Constantius the belief that his forces were much larger than they actually were. The illusion worked and, by October of 361, Julian took the town of Sirmium without shedding any Roman blood. In fact this was welcomed with flowers and good wishes. It was here that Julian sent out his letters to the local councils of Rome, Athens, Corinth and Sparta. This put the entire region within his grasp and set the stage for a march to southeast Naissus, where he would remain until early December.

It was at this point that Constantius realized he could no longer remain on the Persian front and that he had no choice but to head west and deal with Julian. While Julian settled at

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248 Julian Letter to the Athenians, 286B; Ammianus Marcellinus 21.3.6; Julian took letters off the captured king and wrote that “He set the barbarians on us, and declared me his enemy among them, and paid them wages, so that the nation of the Gauls might be ruined.” Letter to the Athenians, 286A; Ammianus Marcellinus 21.3.1-5 also addresses the issue: “Constantius wrote to Vadomarius that he should attack the districts on his domain; to the end that Julian, in fear of this, should abandon the defence of Gaul.”

249 Woods, “Rex Alamannorum,” 694; Claudius Mamertinus, Latin Panegyric XI: Claudii Mamertini gratiarum action de consulate suo Iuliano Imp. 3.6.1.


251 Ammianus Marcellinus 21.8.3.

252 Ammianus Marcellinus 21.10.1

253 See Glanville Downey, “Julian the Apostle at Antioch.” Church History, 8 (1939): 313-314; Only the Letter to the Athenians survives and a small fragment of Julian’s Letter to the Corinthians. See Fragment no.3 297.

254 Bowersock, Julian the Apostle, 59; Naissus (modern day Nis/Nish in Serbia), is the birthplace of the Emperors Constantine and Justinian I.

255 Browning, The Emperor Julian, 120.
Naissus, the emperor began traveling from Antioch toward Constantinople and began rallying his troops in the area for a final confrontation against Julian. Early November 361, the emperor became ill with a fever as he passed through Tarsus on his way to Constantinople. By the time he reached Mopsucrenae, the emperor knew that he was dying. An Arian bishop was requested for a baptism, and soon Constantius named Julian as his sole heir. The Christian writer Gregory Nazianzen tells us that Constantius died saddened by the fact that he had not killed Julian as a child. Although the emperor died on November 3, 361, news of the death did not reach Julian in Naissus until the end of the month. Julian immediately marched toward Constantinople to receive his crown, to provide a proper traditional burial for Constantius, and begin his administration as the sole emperor of the Roman Empire.

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256 Browning, *The Emperor Julian*, 121.


258 Gregory Nazianzen, *Orations* 4.48. St. Gregory tries to claim that Julian poisoned his older cousin but this accusation is given with no evidence. This is not surprising to see coming from Gregory who waited several years after Julian’s death to write his two “*Invectives Against Julian*.” In his writings, Gregory makes it well known that he hated Julian with passion.
CHAPTER 4

CHANGES ARE A GOOD THING: ADMINISTRATION UNDER JULIAN

The civil war between the two cousins Julian and Constantius very well could have torn the empire apart. The fates intervened, and in 361 Constantius died after ruling for twenty four years. Constantius left Julian as sole heir to the empire.259 Once Julian heard of the news he ordered a future successor Jovian, to take his cousin’s body to Constantinople with full honors.260 Upon his arrival to Constantinople, Julian followed the tradition and buried the former emperor with full accolades.261 Although his reign was short lived, Julian’s administration is among the most well documented of the late Roman Empire. The likely explanation for this was his strong opposition to Christianity.262 Julian was known for being extremely deliberate in his rule of the empire. Almost immediately Julian put policies into place that were designed to advance the whole of the empire and also advance pagan ideology.263 This is not to say, however, that his role as the last pagan emperor was the only reason for Julian’s significance as a Roman emperor. Julian was particularly adept in the collection of taxes, restored the rights of cities to collect taxes within their own territories, worked to reduce the tax burden of the empire as a whole, and even set out to rebuild the cities that had fallen on harder times. Julian immediately upon his accession proclaimed a religious amnesty.264

259 Ammianus Marcellinus 21.15.2; Zosimus claimed that it was through the armies that Julian was elected as sole Augustus. Zosimus 3.11.
260 Ammianus Marcellinus 21.16.20.
261 Libanius 18.121.
263 Mitchell, Later Roman Empire, 76.
264 Ammianus Marcellinus 22.5.1.
Upon his arrival into the city named after his uncle, Julian entered to cheers from the citizens and senate alike.⁶⁵ Acclamations were set up to indicate assent and approval. Such acclamations were used to honor rulers and in the fourth century, these events increased in importance as part of the ceremonial surrounding the Roman emperors.⁶⁶ Ammianus wrote,

It seemed like a dream that this man of slight build who had just reached maturity should, after a series of noble exploits and bloody victories over kings and peoples, have flown from city to city with unheard of speed…he should finally receive the imperial power by decree of heaven without the infliction of any loss upon the state.⁶⁷

Although the religious reforms of Julian tend to be given the greatest attention, his imperial reforms were no less noteworthy. After attending to the funeral of Constantius, Julian’s first reform as Augustus was within the Imperial Roman system itself. Shortly after his acclamation as Augustus, Julian commenced the trial and punishment of numerous imperial officials in the city of Chalcedon.⁶⁸ Keeping with tradition, Julian set up a court to try those who had been on the losing side of the civil wars.⁶⁹ This was accomplished through the use of a military tribunal headed by Salustius Secundus. They were given full powers to arrest and punish those guilty of crimes under the previous regime.⁷⁰ In an effort to show a lack of vindictiveness towards his predecessor, Julian refrained from presiding as judge over the tribunals himself and instead appointed his loyal military generals for this task.⁷¹ There were to be six judges that Julian

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⁶⁵ Ammianus Marcellinus 22.2.3.
⁶⁷ Ammianus Marcellinus 22.2.4.
⁶⁹ Socrates 3.78.17-20.
⁷¹ Browning, *The Emperor Julian*, 124 Julian had given the legal authority the rubric of *coercitio-* the right of a Roman magistrate to do what was necessary for the business of the State. See also Bowersock, *Julian the Apostate*, 69.
appointed: Salustius Secundus (Praetorian Prefect of the east), Nevitta (Master of Cavalry) (barbarian), Jovinus (Master of Cavalry in Illyricum), Agilo (Mastery of Infantry), Arbito (Master of Cavalry) and Claudius Mamertinus (Praetorian Prefect of Illyricum). The trial of Constantius’ ministers by military tribunal was largely a success. The number of condemned at Chalcedon was small in comparison to the purges by earlier emperors. Although, most suffered nothing worse than banishment, there are several important executions to mention. The eunuch Eusebius, ex-grand chamberlain of Constantius, the informer, Paul the Chain, and Apodemius one of Constantius’ *agens in rebus*. All three were burned alive due to their involvement in the execution of Gallus, along with other crimes they had committed. Florentius, one of Julian’s antagonists in Gaul, disappeared but was still condemned *in absentia*. The trials resulted in a death sentence for Julian’s loyal friend and finance minister, Ursulus. Ammianus indicated that this was due to remarks he had made disparaging the efficiency of the eastern army after the fall of Amida (360) to the Persians.

The death sentence of Ursulus is particularly important to mention because it is regarded by historians as evidence of Julian’s lack of absolute power at his ascension. Ursulus had been in charge of Julian’s treasury while Julian was Caesar in Gaul and Ursulus played an essential role in their finances. It is important to note that Ammianus Marcellinus 21.10.8, thought Julian’s barbarian general Nevitta was crude, uncultivated and cruel: *inconsummatum et subagrestem et quod minus erat ferendum celsa in potestate crudelem.* Both generals, Arbetio and Agilo were officers of the guard regiments, the *Jovii* and the *Heraculii*. Both were former officers in the eastern armies of Constantius.

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272 Ammianus Marcellinus 22.3.1-3; Bowersock, *Julian the Apostate*, 67-68; Tougher, *Julian the Apostate*, 45. It is important to note that Ammianus Marcellinus 21.10.8, thought Julian’s barbarian general Nevitta was crude, uncultivated and cruel: *inconsummatum et subagrestem et quod minus erat ferendum celsa in potestate crudelem.* Both generals, Arbetio and Agilo were officers of the guard regiments, the *Jovii* and the *Heraculii*. Both were former officers in the eastern armies of Constantius.

273 Ammianus Marcellinus 22.3.10 Apodemium enim…Paulumque notarium cognomento Catenam, cum multorum gemitu nominadum, vivos exustos, qui sperari debuit oppressit eventus; Browning, *The Emperor Julian*, 125 claims that Paul the Chain and the others were actually buried alive.

274 Ammianus Marcellinus 22.7.5. Florentius survived due to the fact that Julian despised informers and would not listen to their reports on where he was hiding.

275 Ammianus Marcellinus 22.3.8; Libanius 18.152. Both Ammianus and Libanius claim that Ursulus was a victim of the army who hated him.

276 Bowersock, *Julian the Apostate*, 66-68. Bowersock claims that Julian was trying to win over the army of Constantius.
role to Julian’s success during times when Constantius was less than accommodating.\textsuperscript{277} The death of one of his most loyal supporters was the price Julian was required to pay for the support of his eastern generals.\textsuperscript{278} Although Julian did nothing to prevent the sentence of death from being carried out, Julian did express his disapproval with the verdict by restoring the properties to the family of his condemned friend.\textsuperscript{279} It is important to note that Ammianus who held Julian in such high regards is critical of the Chalcedon trials and lashes out at Julian saying that the proceedings were unjust and the punishments were too harsh. Ammianus states that the condemnation of the man showed ingratitude and demonstrated that Julian had to oblige the army [of the east] to survive. He ends stating that “Justice herself seemed to weep.”\textsuperscript{280} This is noteworthy because, in previous administrations such as with the reigns of Caligula (r.37-41) and Domitian (r.81-96) the inauguration of a new Augustus typically meant a large number of death sentences were handed down to any who had opposed the new emperor. For Julian, Ursulus was one of only a comparatively small number of those who were killed.

It was at the trials of Chalcedon that we see Julian’s practical streak: in order to establish his rule Julian had to make compromises to secure the support of the eastern armies.\textsuperscript{281} By the beginning of 362, the tribunal had completed its work and dissolved.

One of the earliest reforms implemented by Julian was the dismissal of many imperial servants and the implementation of a more humble existence for himself as Augustus.\textsuperscript{282} Julian

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277 Bowersock, \textit{Julian the Apostate}, 69.
278 Browning, \textit{The Emperor Julian}, 125.
279 Ammianus Marcellinus 22.3.8; Libanius 18.152; Bowersock, \textit{Julian the Apostate}, 69. Libanius wrote that Julian was disturbed by the death of Ursulus.
280 Ammianus Marcellinus 22.3.8. Cf. Ammianus says “Justice herself, seemed to weep.” \textit{ipsa mihi videtur flesse iustitia}.
281 Tougher, \textit{Julian the Apostate}, 46.
282 Claudius Mamertinus 1.11.3-4. Here Claudius Mamertinus describes both the extravagance of the courts and Julian’s reforms that he put into action.
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due to his upbringing tried to live a modest life like the soldier and philosopher. Julian sought to return to the traditions of the past and recreate the idea of the citizen emperor. Julian wished to imitate his ideal emperor, philosopher emperor Marcus Aurelius. Julian was a man of relatively simple tastes and was displeased by the excesses of the former emperor’s courts. Under Constantius, the imperial palace employed a great number of cooks, barbers, and other highly paid servants and eunuchs. Julian was shocked when he called for the court barber and mistook him for an official of the state. The barber told the emperor that he received the sum of twenty men’s rations as well as an annual salary. Julian, sick with their tasteless display of wealth, found that the palace staff were ridiculously overpaid and promptly fired them. To the Christian Gregory Nazianzus, the reforms Julian put in place were strictly against the Christians that were previously employed under Constantius. This, however, was not true. Both Christians and pagans alike were fired. Julian’s changes to the imperial palace extended to the curiosi and agentes in rebus, officials under the Master of Offices. They had been used as domestic spies and were known for their greed and dishonestly. Under Julian, they had been reduced in numbers. All of these palace officials, together with their staff of servants, were unemployed

283 Most of the ancient sources as well as Julian claim that he was trying to imitate one of his biggest influences, the philosopher emperor Marcus Aurelius. Julian wanted to end the ceremony that had separated ruler and ruled and wanted to truly be the Primus inter pares (First among equals). Julian Letter to Themistius, 253B; Libanius 18.190-1; Ammianus Marcellinus 16.1.4 wrote rectae perfectaeque rationis indigene congruens Marco, ad cuius aemulationem actus suos effingebat et mores: “perfect reason of things in harmony with Marcus Aurelius, in emulation of whom he moulded his conduct and his character.”

284 Ammianus Marcellinus 22.4.8. This case of the barber was one of many. Browning, The Emperor Julian, 126 tells of another story of imperial cooks that one was in such magnificent clothing that Julian mistook him for a senator.

285 Libanius 18.130; Ammianus Marcellinus 22.4.10.

286 Gregory Nazianzus Oration, 4.64. Again, Gregory makes false claims seeing that after the massive firing of employees, Julian sent letters to prominent Christians that he wanted to be members of his court. See Julian’s Letter to Aetius, 404C; Julian’s Letter to Basil, 381-382; Julian’s Letter to Prohaerius, 373D-374B.

287 Browning, The Emperor Julian, 126.
almost immediately upon Julian’s ascension to the imperial throne.\textsuperscript{288} Julian was able to free up large amounts to put into other reforms.

With better funds, Julian immediately began to expand upon the work he had begun while stationed in Gaul. Throughout the empire, many of the cities that once held distinction had taken a down turn and were in need of renovation. Julian, during his education had seen the state of many of the cities in Greece. Julian launched a major restoration project to restore the cities to their original glory. Claudius Mamertinus in his \textit{Panegyric to Julian} wrote on the honors that Julian bestowed.

\par It would take too long to list all the cities restored to life at the intervention of the Emperor: all the cities of Macedonia, Illyria and the Peloponnesus, thanks to one letter from the hand of our all powerful emperor, enjoyed a sudden resurgence of youth, with freshly rebuilt walls...with public squares, gymnasia all thronged with happy and cheerful people, with all the old feast days once more being celebrated, as well as new ones dedicated in honor of the prince.\textsuperscript{289}

Julian knew how impressive and affluent these cities had been from his education but had also experienced how they had fallen into decay. The emperor Julian was able to accomplish this task without financially straining the people of the cities. Claudius Mamertius complimented Julian for his ability to handle funds. “What a wonder it is that no one, faced with all that great work of improvement, felt the burden of any cost...For all that which others used to squander on personal pleasures is now entirely for the benefit of the community.”\textsuperscript{290} Other primary sources such as Libanius, Ammianus Marcellinus and even later historian Zosimus back Mamertinus’ praise of Julian in handling the funds. The Christians detractors fail to counter argue for or against Julian’s financial abilities.

\textsuperscript{288} Ammianus Marcellinus 22.4.1.

\textsuperscript{289} Claudius Mamertinus \textit{Panegyric to Julian}, 1.9.2-4.

\textsuperscript{290} Claudius Mamertinus \textit{Panegyric to Julian}, 1.10.1-3.
Moderation became the norm with respect to Julian’s eating habits, consumption of alcohol, manner of dress, and sexuality. It was not uncommon for Julian’s predecessors to eat until full and then induce vomiting so they could continue eating.\textsuperscript{291} Many prior emperors also chose to get drunk at nearly every meal and to costume themselves in all manner of expensive imperial regalia. Libanius pointed out that Julian “wore the imperial costume when he had to and that he did not measure the happiness of his reign by the depth of his purple.”\textsuperscript{292} Julian rarely drank alcohol and would dress in a deliberately simple manner, even during ceremonial occasions.\textsuperscript{293} Finally, following the death of his wife Helena in 360, Julian took a vow of chastity which he kept until his death.\textsuperscript{294} Some believed he would remarry after becoming emperor, but Julian never did.\textsuperscript{295}

Julian’s modest imperial style was not without its critics. During a stay in Antioch between July 362 and March 363, it was reported that Julian undermined the dignity of the imperial office to such an extent that the people of Antioch composed satires about him.\textsuperscript{296} The people mocked his personal appearance, his lack of attendance at Roman spectacles, and his significantly more humble lifestyle.\textsuperscript{297} They expected a man removed from them by the spectacle of power and not someone who would leap up in appreciation for a panegyric.\textsuperscript{298} Julian learned to live this lifestyle through his upbringing under Mardonius, to whom he had been entrusted.

\textsuperscript{291} Julian \textit{Misopogon}, 340C.
\textsuperscript{292} Libanius 18.191.
\textsuperscript{293} Ammianus Marcellinus 25.4.4. cf. Libanius 18.171-174 for Julian’s habits of food and drinks.
\textsuperscript{294} Helena was married to Julian to strengthen the bonds of the family. She was the sister of Constantius II and cousin to her husband Julian. Julian barely mentions her but gives an entire panegyric to the empress Eusebia. Helena died in Gaul in 360 during the \textit{Quinquennial games}.
\textsuperscript{295} Libanius 18.179; Ammianus Marcellinus 25.4.2-4.
\textsuperscript{296} Tougher, \textit{Julian the Apostate}, 48.
\textsuperscript{297} Adrian Murdoch, \textit{The Last Pagan: Julian the Apostate and the Death of the Ancient World}, (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 2003), 105; Tougher, \textit{Julian the Apostate}, 48-49.
\textsuperscript{298} Potter, \textit{The Roman Empire at Bay AD 180-395}, 515.
Julian’s reaction to the satires, however, was swift: he threatened never to return to Antioch and appointed Alexander of Heliopolis, a man of ill repute, as governor of the region upon his departure.²⁹⁹ Although his reign demonstrated Julian as quite the moderate in regards to imperial wrath, while dealing with the people of Antioch he clearly did not hesitate to use it. Julian showed how thin-skinned he was and how he was in constant need and want of acceptance and popularity. He complained in his Misopogon: “I praised you… thinking that you were sons of Greeks, and I myself, even my family is Thracian, I am a Greek in my customs… I remitted much gold coin… I contemplated making your city greater and more powerful…the people of Antioch want and prefer the Kappa [Constantius] and the Chi [Christ].”³⁰⁰ Julian showed that he was not living up to his idol of Marcus Aurelius and being an obtainable and accessible emperor.

The second non-religious reform of Julian was the restoration of the senate in Constantinople, as well as the expansion of city councils throughout the empire. Julian knew that the lifeblood of the city was having a strong council.³⁰¹ Julian began by enlarging the class of citizens that were permitted to serve on such councils so that a more diverse group of individuals could serve.³⁰² Julian removed the exemption from service as a decurion (councilor) formerly granted to members of the Christian clergy.³⁰³ Taking these exemptions away from both Christians and pagans, Julian was able to create more revenue for the cities and alleviate provincial excessive taxes. The Christians historian Sozomen believed that this move was the

²⁹⁹ Ammianus Marcellinus 23.2.3.
³⁰⁰ Julian Misopogon, 356D-375D and 367C-368B.
³⁰¹ Libanius 18.147.
³⁰² Julian Misopogon, 367D; Libanius 18.148; Bowersock, Julian the Apostate, 73.
³⁰³ Theodosian Code 12.1.50; Bowersock, Julian the Apostate, 73-74. Decurions were councilors of cities that were drawn from the local elites and that served on the interest and behalf of the communities.
first of Julian’s anti-Christian policies. To Julian it was simply a means to restore control of the councils to affluent and intelligent citizens. When Julian appointed these men, for military appointments it was based off experiences and not political influence and connections. Civilian offices were not appointed by wealth or family heritage. The most important thing to note is that under Julian, he tried to appoint the most professional and educated men to offices and high ranking positions. Julian even tried reaching out to Christians such St. Basil in hopes if having him join his administration. In his Letter 26 To Basil Julian states “those who share the task of administration with me are, I am convinced, honest and reasonable men, intelligent and entirely capable.” The biggest problem with this attempt was the empire’s own role in the creation of more lucrative imperial and ecclesiastical positions. Although Julian’s interest in revitalizing city councils was not unusual, the removal of service exemptions caused some degree of discontent throughout the empire. It should be noted, that the restoration of city councils had become a

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304 Sozomen 5.5. Sozomen felt this law was an anti-Christian law because it repealed the exemption that Constantine had given them.

305 Bowersock, Julian the Apostate, 74; Murdoch, The Last Pagan, 109. Julian Misopogon, 368A claims that “the cities had been reduced to pulling the dregs of society from the streets to serve as high ranking city council officials. Julian did not touch the military commands in east because it would possibly be dangerous trying to remove Agilo and Arbetio (both former generals under Constantius). Julian appointed one of his most trusted advisors Salutius Secundus to the position of Praetorian Prefect of the east. The Gaul, Claudius Mamertius who was already Praetorian Prefect of Illyricum, was awarded the consulate for the year 362. The barbarian and one of Julian’s trusted general Nevitta was to take the other position of consul in 362. Julian’s friend Anatolius, who had held the position Magister Officiorum (Master of Offices) since 360, continued to hold the same position in Constantinople. The Quaestor Sacri Palatii (Quaestor of the Sacred Palace) was filled by Jovius. Felix, who was appointed Master of Offices under Constantius, was moved to hold the position of Sacred Largesses. Nymphidianus, the brother of Maximus of Ephesus, a rhetorician, was made Magister Epistularum Graecarum. Friend of Libanius, Eccidcius Olympus, was instilled as prefect of Egypt. Julian’s uncle, Julianus was given a key post of Comes Orientis (Count of the East). Another Julianus became governor of Phoenicia. Artabius, another friend of Libanius, was appointed governor of the frontier province of Euphratensis, The governorship of Syria was given to Celsus who was philosopher and rhetorician. Leontius, a fellow student of Libanius was chosen to be the governor of Palestine while Vettius Prætextatus was appointed to the politically unimportant but honorable post of proconsul of Achaea.

306 Julian Letter to Basil, 381B-382D. Although Basil did not accept Julian’s invitation to join his court, they both remained always cordial to one another. This was vastly different from Gregory Nazianzen, Sozomen and Socrates.
fashionable imperial idea by the time Julian ascended to the throne. Julian simply took more action than his predecessor to implement it.307

Another of his reforms dealt with the imperial treasury. Julian was certainly weary of the corruption that took place in prior regimes and sought to stamp this out particularly among tax collectors. Constantius had a terrible reputation in regards to the taxation among the provincials.308 Like in Gaul, the system was corrupt and outdated. Ammianus tells how bad the system under Constantius had become.

Sorrows of the age where increased by the insatiable greed of the tax collectors, whose exactions earned Constantius more hatred than revenue. What made the situation seem even less tolerable in the eyes of many was that he never heard a tax case himself, or took any steps to alleviate the burden of the provinces.309

From his experiences in Gaul, Julian started to make officials responsible for collecting taxes accountable. Julian ordered that all tax collectors would endure formal reviews every five years of service. This was so that those who were corrupt could be investigated and punished accordingly.310 There is little doubt that Julian remembered the financial problems he often encountered as Caesar in Gaul and the necessity of stamping out corruption on a large scale as Augustus. Julian proclaimed that no new taxes could be levied and no taxes could be remitted without his approval.311 The various restrictions and burdensome taxes in favor of Christianity that had been imposed upon pagans and Jews were lifted.312

308 Ammianus Marcellinus 21.16.17.
309 Ammianus Marcellinus 21.16.18.
310 Theodosian Code 11.6.7
311 Theodosian Code 11.16.10. This would also help eliminate the corruption of imperial officials trying to take in supplemental taxes.
In an effort to avoid excessive imperial expenditures, Julian turned to reforming the *cursus publicus* (state transport system). Julian limited the amount of official courier travel throughout the empire.\(^{313}\) It was a network of animals that ensured the lines of supplies, communication and travel throughout the empire. The wealthier citizens and the Christian bishops abused the imperial post and had been granted free use of the system. Ammianus claims “throngs of bishops hastened hither and thither on the public post-horses to the various synods.”\(^{314}\) The Christian clergy had the privilege of unlimited use of the system under both Constantine and his son, Constantius.\(^{315}\) Due to its over use, the imperial post was on the point of collapse. The roads of the empire had been designed to suit the state’s needs, above all those of the armies. The unauthorized seizure of men, animals, wagons, hospitality in billets and other facilities for state transport formed a recurrent theme.\(^{316}\) It was the cities that bore the cost of furnishing the animals required for such trips. With the system being taken advantage of, the animals procured would often die of overexertion.\(^{317}\) The emperor began to restrict the use of the *cursus publicus* to official state business. Julian also kept the ability to issue *evectiones* (passes) for himself and several other officials.\(^{318}\) By reducing the number of couriers permitted to travel on official business, Julian also lessened the financial burden on the cities of the empire. Due to this newly placed restriction, the Christians took issue with the proclamation.

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\(^{313}\) Libanius 18. 145. It was being used as a means to travel and to send mail across the Empire.

\(^{314}\) Ammianus Marcellinus 21.16.18.

\(^{315}\) Ammianus Marcellinus 21.16.19.


\(^{317}\) Libanius 18.143; Bowersock, *Julian the Apostate*. 75-76.

\(^{318}\) *Theodosian Code* 13.5.12; Libanius 18.145.
With these types of imperial reforms, Julian could be seen as a moderate ruler. Julian saw the office of emperor as a position that was both the guarantor of all the power in the empire and the model for its exercise. Julian desired to be a leader \textit{primus inter pares} “first among equals” which he had learned while studying the concept introduced by the first emperor, Augustus. It was Julian’s religious reforms, not his imperial policies, which made him the subject of so much scholarship. Aside from the fact that he was no longer a Christian, there was not, however, a great deal that was unusual about the manner in which Julian practiced his faith. Julian’s actions against Christianity existed in the form of his personal behavior, imperial decrees, and written works.

One notable action by Julian was his regular practice of blood sacrifices to the pagan gods. Many of his actions as emperor can be attributed to his youth and education, the practice of blood sacrifice is a rather controversial area of scholarship. Julian’s education during his upbringing included learning from the students of Iamblicus, this would have provided the intellectual justification for blood sacrifices. Although his life can be described as one of philosophical scholarship in the broad sense, the practice of theurgy consisted of mystic rituals and “magic tricks” that are more analogous to the practice of blood sacrifice. Julian is likely to have learned the ways to sacrifices from Neo-Platonist.

There were both “blood” and “bloodless” cults that existed to worship the Hellenic gods of early Rome and each had their own method of worship. Many common cults conducted

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320 Franz Cumont, \textit{Oriental Religions in Roman Paganism}, (New York: Dover Publications, 1956), 286. One of Plotinus’ principles taken by Iamblichus is that the gods must be honored by sacrifices of animated beings.
321 Bowersock, \textit{Julian the Apostate}, 77.
bloodless “sacrifice” to appease the gods through such measures as the singing of hymns, lighting of lamps, and the burning of incense.\(^{322}\)

The sheer number of blood sacrifices carried out by Julian during his reign is often embellished. Ammianus wrote, “he drenched the altars with blood of an excessive number of victims, sometimes slaughtering a hundred oxen at a time, with countless flocks of various other animals.\(^{323}\) The amount of sacrifices that Julian offered, earned him a second nickname other than “apostate.” The people of Antioch called him the slaughterer (\textit{victimarius}).\(^{324}\) The question as to why an emperor who put such an emphasis on moderation in all things followed through with a practice that was such a large public expense. Julian had been taught that no prayer to the gods was complete without it. The regular blood sacrifices served as an ever-present reminder of the new emperor’s desire to stamp out Christianity. Julian’s constant presence at pagan altars would subtly coerce Christians to appear before pagan monuments if they expected patronage from the new Augustus.\(^{325}\) This was important to note because unlike his predecessors, who would execute Christians who did not perform sacrifices, Julian merely would not give them his blessings and imperial backing. Blood sacrifices were controversial in the fourth century in regard to religious practices. It was through both his piety and politics that Julian moved to the reinstatement of the old traditions.\(^{326}\)

Although he certainly disliked it, Julian did not make Christianity illegal and did not endorse the harassment of Christians. Julian in fact would openly oppose acts of violence against


\(^{323}\) Ammianus Marcellinus 22.12.6-7 and 25.4.17 This shows that Ammianus felt Julian took the sacrifices too far.

\(^{324}\) Ammianus Marcellinus 22.14.3; Socrates 3.17. Socrates claims that Gregory Nazianzus calls Julian a “burner of bulls.”

\(^{325}\) Libanius 18.121. and 18. 161-163.

\(^{326}\) Libanius 18.160.
Christians. In 361, the Christian bishop George of Cappadocia, whom Julian knew as a child, was murdered in a pagan riot. Julian wrote that George was found guilty of offenses against the citizens of Alexandria, but still deserved a trial for the actions he committed. Julian continued to scold the people of Alexandria stating, “by the gods though I want to praise you I am not able, on account of breaking the law. You people dared to rip a human being to pieces just as dogs a wolf.”

Julian gained the full animosity and hatred of the Christians when he enacted his most infamous law, his edict on teachers. This was the one law Julian passed that solely targeted Christians. Instead of physical punishments, Julian preferred the use of decrees designed to reduce Christianity’s role in the public sphere. In June 362, Julian issued the edict that forbid Christians from becoming teachers in rhetoric and grammar. Julian’s law was put into place to stop Christians from teaching the classics. In his Rescript on Christian Teachers Julian wrote, “when a man thinks one thing and teaches his pupils another, in my opinion he fails to educate as he fails to be an honest man.” Julian then goes on to state,

The gods were guides of all learning for Homer and Hesiod and Herodotus and Thucydides … I think it is absurd that men who expound the works of these writers should dishonor the gods who were honored by them… I give them a choice, either not teach what they do not think is excellent, or if they wish to teach, first they must persuade their pupils that neither Homer nor Hesiod to be guilty of impiety, folly and error.

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327 Athanassiadi, Julian, 24.
328 Julian To the People of Alexandria, 380A; Athanassiadi, Julian, 23-24.
329 Julian Letter to the People of Alexandria, 379D; Ammianus Marcellinus 22.11.1-9. Ammianus tells the horrible death George was given by the pagans of the city. Dracontius, superintendent of the mint and Diodorus, who held the rank of Count were also killed along with George; Browning, The Emperor Julian, 136. Browning argues that George was a “scoundrel” whose only saving grace was his book collection.
330 Tougher, Julian the Apostle, 57; Browning, The Emperor Julian,130; Athanassiadi, Julian,128; Bowersock, Julian the Apostle, 85.
331 Theodosian Code 13.3.5; Athanassiadi, Julian, 124.
332 Julian Rescript on Christian Teachers, 422A-423C.
Julian placed a high value on his own education, especially rhetoric and philosophy. It was no surprise that Julian considered religion and education to be intimately related and their fortunes intertwined.\textsuperscript{333} The edict put out in 362, was to prohibit Christians from teaching the classics but in reality it makes perfect sense. Julian did not want Christians teaching the pagan classics just like Christians would not want pagans to teach Christians scripture. One can actually argue that this was done to set up a better educational system.

The law regarding teachers drew the most passionate criticisms from the Christians. Gregory of Nazianzus, in his two invectives written after the death of Julian, unleashed his anger towards the emperor. He claimed that Julian was “stealing the whole of a culture for the betterment of his own religion and depriving Christians the use of words, a greedy and selfish act.”\textsuperscript{334} The Christian Socrates, wrote how “through his hatred against the faith, he had sized every opportunity to ruin the church.”\textsuperscript{335} Sozomen went on to attack Julian by stating, “within a very brief space of time he converted the Bible into his epics, tragedies, comedies, odes and dialogues for the education of the Christian youths.”\textsuperscript{336} There were some inaccurate allegations from church historians that claimed Julian barred all Christians from seeking the classical education.\textsuperscript{337} The law actually only outlined who could teach. In his \textit{Rescript}, Julian stated, “any youth who wishes to attend the schools is not to be excluded…It would be unreasonable to shut out from the best way, boys who are still too ignorant to know the beliefs of their ancestors.”\textsuperscript{338} There was no better way to cure the Christian than to fill the minds of the children with

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{333} Libanius 18.157.
\textsuperscript{334} Gregory of Nazianzus \textit{Oration}, 4.101.
\textsuperscript{335} Socrates 3.12.
\textsuperscript{336} Sozomen 5.18.
\textsuperscript{337} Socrates 3.16; Sozomen 5.18.
\textsuperscript{338} Julian \textit{Rescript on Christian Teachers}, 425B.
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Hellenism. After all, it was Julian’s dealing with Christians, his family being murdered by ostensible Christians, and through his own education of Hellenism Julian was led to his commitment to the gods. Surprisingly, the pagan historian Ammianus showed hatred with Julian’s attempt to suppress the Christian educators, calling it “a harsh measure and would better be buried in eternal silence.”

The Christian sources that claimed Julian was a great persecutor of the Christians and their faith were not accurate. The days of Christians being “thrown to the lions” were at an end under Julian’s reign. Julian never wanted to make martyrs of the people and give them a cause for them to rally around. Perhaps he learned this from studying the persecutions of Nero (64), Trajan Decius (250-251) and Valerian (258-260) Julian would not repeat their failed persecutions. Sozomen however, believed that the emperor was jealous of the Christians and chose to persecute the followers of Christ by other means. Rather than violence and forced conversions, Sozomen stated that he sought to reduce the Christians’ ability to defend themselves intellectually.

It was simply from the envy of their glory, that instead of employing fire and the sword against them, and maltreating their bodies like former persecutors, and instead of casting them into the sea, or burying them alive in order to compel them to a change of sentiment, he had recourse to argument and persuasion, and sought by means to reduce them to paganism; he expected to gain his ends more easily by abandoning all violent measures, and by the manifestation of unexpected benevolence.

Julian failed to see any injustice of this law. In a letter to one of his provincial governors, Julian defended his stance on the law of teachers saying “I affirm by the gods that I do not wish the

339 Ammianus Marcellinus 22.10.6. The historian wrote “illud inclemens autem erat obruendum perenni silentio.” Ammianus again mentions his criticism in Ammianus Marcellinus 25.4.20. The famous orator Libanius was happy with this law and went on to taunt both Gregory and Basil as barbarians.

340 Sozomen 5.4.
Galileans to be either put to death or unjustly beaten, or to suffer any other injuries; nevertheless I do assert that the god-fearing should be preferred to them.”

On the other hand, Julian’s disdain for Christians actually made him something of a pioneer in the area of religious freedom. In what was an unheard of decree for his time, Julian in 362, granted religious freedom not only to pagans, but to Christians and Jews. Knowing how the various Christian sects tended to squabble over subtle differences in theology, Julian went so far as to summon to his palace the Christian bishops who were opposing each other so that they might learn to get along with one another. This invitation was probably not sincere. Heretics of all shades of opinion were recalled from banishment: Arians, Novatians, Donatist, and the numerous sects of Christianity, who were all too ready to come to blows with each other. Ammianus wrote that Julian knew the Christian sects to be the “most savage” in their hatred toward opposing Christian factions and that Julian was playing on those things that divided his enemies.

Even if this had been his goal, Julian was still relatively tolerant and even kind toward his Christian subjects. Julian remitted the sentences of many non-Orthodox Christians who had been imprisoned or exiled by Constantius. This led to a number of bishops returning to their parishes and others who had been exiled for religious reasons to return to their homes. Of course, this edict was like a double-edged sword. Although Christian leaders were able to return and remain in Roman lands, pagans were also permitted to reopen their temples and worship in public. One

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341 Julian Letter to Artabius, 376C; Bowersock, Julian the Apostate, 83; Wright, Julian, 313. Julian, like the stoic philosopher Epictetus (55-135), always refers to and calls the Christians Galileans because he wanted to emphasize that this was a “local creed.” Julian also refers to Christ as “the Nazarene” having the same intention. Julian’s attitude when using both words is that of a philosopher that rejects the claims of one small sect to have set up a universal religion.

342 Julian Rescript on Christian Teachers, 422A-424A.


344 Ammianus Marcellinus 22.5.3-4. Ammianus implies this was a devious move by Julian.
important example to point out is that once Julian enacted his religious toleration, the Donatist leaders came back to Africa in triumph. Donatism swept through Numidium and Mauretania like a forest fire. Catholicism in Africa would not gain ground again until the time of St. Augustine.345

Another note of interest is Julian’s policies towards the Jews. The policies were more favorable than those directed toward Christians. Julian reversed the policy of Constantius and Gallus Cæsar who had treated the Jews with extreme harshness.346 In a letter to a Jewish community in Antioch, Julian’s tone was friendly as he denounced the heavy taxes they had been subjected to. In his letter, Julian not only promised to abandon the old levies, but no additional levies against the Jewish people would be raised. The Jews breathed the air of freedom for the first time since the days of Alexander Severus (d.235); all the cruel edicts of earlier emperors, especially those of Hadrian (d. 138) were rescinded.347 Julian himself had plans for rebuilding the Temple in Jerusalem and to restore Jerusalem to the Jews.348 Julian respected the Jewish religion, discipline, and their ability to offer sacrifices to their god.349 Gregory of Nazianzus with his usual rhetoric stated,

He stirred up against us the nation of the Jews, as well as that hatred for us which has smoldered in them from the very beginning and now was the appointed time for them to return into their own land, and rebuild the Temple, and restore the reign of their hereditary institutions-all this, his true purpose; under the mark of benevolence.350

To Julian, the Jews practiced an ancient monotheistic religion that included temples, sacred groves, rites of sacrificing and divination which impressed him and earned them his respect.351

346 Sozomen 4.7.
348 Julian *Fragment of a Letter to a Priest, 295C.*
349 Wright, *Julian,* 313.
350 Gregory of Nazianzus 5.3; I believe Julian respected the Jewish people and religion.
Some historians such as Bowersock, *Julian the Apostate*, claim that Julian was doing this as a “my enemy’s enemy is my friend” plot. I disagree with this because Julian had a strong appreciation for ancient religions that had sacred texts, divinations, and offered sacrifices.

Julian in 362 chose to challenge the writings and doctrines of the Christian faith. He had wanted to do so since the beginning of his education but was not able due to his cousin Constantius. Julian knew the doctrines better than most. Eunapius wrote how Julian “embarrassed the royal eunuchs, for he had their books so thoroughly memorized by heart.” Julian knew the doctrines better than most. Eunapius wrote how Julian “embarrassed the royal eunuchs, for he had their books so thoroughly memorized by heart.”

With his knowledge of the Christian documents that he had learned through his education, Julian was able to combat the Christians.

Julian’s “manifesto” against Christianity is his treatise *Against the Galileans.* Julian always referred to the Christians as “Galileans” and Christ as “the Nazarene” because he wished to impart upon his listeners that Christianity was a small local creed or “the creed of fishermen.” Julian looked at the Galilean faith as “a fiction of man, and a “monstrous tale” if taken literally. His chief aim in the treatise was to show that there is no evidence in the Old Testament for the idea of Christianity. In fact the Christians had no right to regard their teaching as a development that stemmed from Judaism, as well as the idea that Christians had proclaimed a universal religion. Much of the work itself has been lost and only portions of the first (of three) books survive wherein Julian outlines a three-part procedure for dismantling the case for Christianity. Julian first discussed the human account of divinity in general. Second, he

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352 Eunapius 473. The ability to quote biblical passages were evident in his treatise, *Against the Galileans.*
353 According to Libanius 18.178 Julian wrote *Against the Galileans* in the winter of 362-363. Julian attacks the inconsistencies in both the Old and New Testaments, the extreme literal mindedness in the ways which the Christians interpreted the scriptures and their lack of logic when explaining the contradictions. Julian was turned off by these things from his youth during his education all the way to 362 when he started writing this.
354 Gregory Nazianzus *Oration* 4.76; Socrates 3.12.
355 Julian *Against the Galileans*, 39A-39B.
compared the Greek and Jewish conceptions of divinity. Finally, Julian inquired as to why the Christians chose to abandon the Jewish conception of divinity they had previously preferred in pursuit of their own new concept.357

Julian begins his argument by stating that all men, whether Greek or Jew, have a natural awareness for the divine. This statement implies that the revelation that Christians claimed in Christ was unnecessary.358 The second argument was Julian’s comparison of Greek and Jewish doctrine. The first and primary function of this section was to show the Jews had a far inferior understanding of the divine than that of the Greeks. Julian argued that although the Jewish understanding is inferior to the Greek, the Christian understanding is inferior still noting that if Christians had held on to Jewish teachings they would “not fare entirely badly”359 and stating that Christians had “abandoned the ever living gods for the [mere] corpse of the Jew.”360

Finally, Julian made use of the Old Testament to argue that the Jewish god cared only for the Jewish people (and not the Greeks), noting that it made no sense for Jews to be punished for the worship of idols and not Greeks.361 Julian saw this as proof that the Hebrew god was not the “lord of all,” but rather one among many other gods.362 In related areas of the third section of his argument, Julian stated that because the Hebrew god was only one of many, the talk of a Messiah could not have been a reference to Christ.363 Further attacks on the divinity of Christ depict


358 Julian Against the Galileans, 52B-C; Julian and his animosity is not really directed against Jesus but the claims the Christians make about him. To Julian, Jesus was born a Roman subject, not a citizen. Jesus was an inhabitant of a conquered province that failed to convert many thus not seeming very godlike to Julian: Against the Galileans, 210A-213A.

359 Julian Against the Galileans, 201E.

360 Julian Against the Galileans, 197C-198B.

361 Julian Against the Galileans, 106B-106D.

362 Julian Against the Galileans, 100C.

363 Julian Against the Galileans, 253C; Smith, Julian’s Gods, 201.
accounts of the miracles of Jesus as contradictory and inferior to those miracles performed by Zeus and other pagan gods.364

It is important to note that Julian also addressed the matter of persecution. Although both Jesus and Paul did not recommend the idea of persecution, once the Christians succeeded in getting the upper hand in the Roman Empire under Constantine, they began to persecute pagans. To go beyond that, Julian frequently observed the Christians persecuting other Christians.365 Under the reign of Constantius, Julian recalled “many whole communities of ‘heretics’ were actually butchered…villages were sacked and completely devastated.”366 Julian wrote “you have overturned temples and altars of the Jews, and you have slaughtered not only those of us who remained true to the teachings of their fathers, but men who were as much astray as yourselves, heretics, because they did not wail over the corpse.”367 Julian would not be able to grasp and handle a religion that let so many terrible things happen along with so many contradictions.

There are a number of things to consider with regards to Julian’s administration and how his experiences and education helped influence his rule. It would certainly be understandable to blame the cruelty of Constantius toward Julian’s family as a legitimate reason for possessing the kind of hostility he had toward Christians, seeing throughout his life how Christians were preaching one thing while doing the opposite and constantly being at each other’s throats. It was likely more than that. Julian had an extraordinarily unique education for an emperor. His formal philosophical education certainly had a great deal to do with his conversion away from Christianity. Although he had practical experience in ruling as Caesar in Gaul, it is almost certain

365 Julian *Against the Galileans*, 206A-206B.
366 Julian *Letter to the Citizens of Bostra*, 436B.
367 Julian *Letter to the Citizens of Bostra*, Julian is referring to the massacres of the heretics by the Christians. See also Julian *Letter to the Citizens of Bostra*, 436B.
that Julian was a Christian in name only by the time he received that appointment. During the winter of 363, Julian became increasingly involved with the preparations for what would be the ill-fated Roman invasion of Persia in the spring of 363. Although some were short lived due to his early death in Persia, many of the accomplishments described in this chapter could actually be said to have improved quality of the Roman Empire.
CHAPTER 5
JULIAN AND FINAL ANALYSIS

The legacy of Julian was sealed when the Christian general, Jovian, was elected to take the emperorship in June 363. Julian would become forever known as the “Apostate” emperor who opposed Christianity. His military successes, reforms, and edicts would be pushed to the side and not be taken as significant for the empire. The Christian writers that criticized Julian after his death with their extreme propaganda succeeded in labeling the young emperor. The Christian sources claim that the people throughout the empire hated Julian but if this were truth, then why are there three entire Loeb volumes full of his written work and several surviving laws in the Theodosian Code?\footnote{Julian has the most written work from any emperor of antiquity. The only other emperor whose writing comes close is Julian’s idol, Marcus Aurelius (161-180). We have Julian’s works due to them being copied by Christian monks and scribes from the medieval to Renaissance periods.} There is something to say that Julian was admired by not only sources such as Ammianus Marcellinus, Libanius, Eunapius, but those that were under the rule of Julian. Browning wrote, “his fate moved men’s hearts and minds, and in spite of his failure he was not forgotten.”\footnote{Browning, The Emperor Julian, 221 and 224.} Julian captivated minds both then and now. Ammianus, soldier and historian, who was with him at the last, mourned a hero; to Libanius, his “Grey Eminence,” he was divine; and to Eunapius a saint.\footnote{Stephen H. Nulle, “Julian and the Men of Letters,” The Classical Journal 54. 6 (1959): 258.} He was a talented person who within his short-lived reign, managed to accomplish more than emperors who ruled for decades. It was his experiences and education that helped shaped how he was to rule the empire when he was suddenly thrust into the role of Augustus. It was his charisma, ambition, and drive that has helped his legacy last and
continue to be studied to this day. Julian lived as though he were in Plato’s Republic, not among the dregs of Romulus.\footnote{Nulle, “Julian and the Men of Letters,” 257.}

With Julian’s death, Christianity was solidified as the religion that would be accepted by all the remaining emperors who would take on the title. Julian’s death helped solidify the Christians as an occupying force that held all the high-ranking offices within the empire. Even though the Christians now held the positions of power, they still ruled over an empire that was largely pagan. The empire in 350-360 was not yet a Christian empire.\footnote{Averil Cameron, The Later Roman Empire, (Cambridge, MA: Havard University Press, 1993), 57-58. Cameron claims that the Christian population was only around 25 percent at most. It was during the later reign of Emperor Theodosius (379-395) when Christianity became legally the official religion of the Roman Empire: Theodosian Code 16.I. 2. Not only did Theodosius make Christianity the legal religion but he also banned all other religions.} The senatorial aristocracy was still largely pagan.\footnote{Senator’s paganism was affected by the syncretistic monotheism that placed an emphasis on originally non-Roman cults, such as Mithras, Sol Invictus, or the Magna Mater.}

Julian learned how to run and fix the empire through his experiences while he was stationed out in Gaul. Although Julian had no previous experience in governmental affairs, he proved equal to the task. He quickly jumped into learning, not only taking in his previous education and experiences, but by reading some of the greats that had come before him such as Julius Caesar and Marcus Aurelius. Upon becoming emperor, Julian carried the goals he achieved in Gaul throughout his reign. When Julian arrived in Gaul, he faced rampant corruption, over taxation, ruined cities, and constant raiding of barbarian tribes. Julian went to work to destroy corruption, starting by prosecuting officials who had been found guilty of abusing their power and position. He then worked on taxation, reforming the system and reducing the taxes on the citizens of Gaul. He continued by starting a rebuilding program and then by securing the frontier, making Gaul safe once again for Roman citizens. Julian crossed the
Rhine several times, never losing a battle even though most of the time he was outnumbered and dealing with incompetent officers. He did not seek to conquer and expand which he easily could have done, but sought to revive the cities under Roman rule and give the Romans security.374

Julian, from his learning and experiences, continued to use his success from what he had done in Gaul. When becoming sole Augustus, he got rid of corruption by reforming the Imperial court and the provincials. Julian appointed officials based on merit and not just wealth and religious affiliations. Julian’s reforms that he started throughout the empire benefitted both pagans and Christians alike. He restored most of the empire back to her former glory. Financial stability was brought to the empire under his reign. He reduced the taxes throughout the empire and limited the excessive spending. He set up massive renovation and rebuilding projects that were meant to restore the cities leaving them better than before. These cities would have revenue to which they could maintain their renovations and up-keep. Julian passed laws that held officials accountable. Officials were no longer allowed to collect supplemental taxes. Julian proceeded to pass laws that only gave him permission to levy or remit taxes. He reformed the cursus publicus, which had been over-used and abused under Constantine and his son, Constantius. It was now being used for its original purpose, rapid travel of communications and government officials. Once Julian had set these laws, reforms, and renovations in place, he turned again to the security of the Roman Empire and set out to face the Persian king, Shapur II.375 Julian had not yet lost a

374 Julian emulated Augustus (27B. C. – 14 A. D.), Hadrian (117-138) and Marcus Aurelius (161-180) as opposed to Alexander the Great (363-323 B. C.) Libanius, Letter to Aristophanes, 1-3 claims “after retaking our lands we expect the emperor to come leading the present leader [Shapur], after the latter has handed over the kingdom to the fugitive [Hormisdas].” John Matthews, The Roman Empire of Ammianus, (London: Duckworth, 1989), 140 says that a victory over the Persians would indicate that Julian was divinely favored among the gods. Ammianus Marcellinus 22.12.2 and 25.4.26-27 claims that Julian was motivated by revenge against the Persians and the desire to add the title Parthicus.

375 See Appendix B Figure B.8 for map of Julian’s Persian Campaign.
battle to the Persians and wanting to rally his troops and lead from the front, in haste left for battle without his lorica.\textsuperscript{376} Ammianus wrote,

The Emperor flew from one danger to another, and our light armed troops took the offensive, hacking backs and legs of the Persians and their monstrous beasts (elephants) as they turned tail. Julian throwing caution to the winds, thrust himself boldly into the fight, shouting and waving his arms to make it clear that the enemy had been routed and to encourage his men to a furious pursuit. His escort of guards, who had been scattered in the melee, were crying out to him from all sides to avoid the mass of fugitives as he would the collapse of a badly built roof, when suddenly a cavalry spear grazed his arm, pierced his ribs and lodged in the lower part of his liver. He tried to pull it out with his right hand, but both sides of the spear were sharp and he felt his fingers cut to the bone. He fell from his horse, there was a rush to the spot, and he was carried to camp.\textsuperscript{377}

Julian died on June 26\textsuperscript{th} 363, surrounded in his tent that night by Maximus, Priscus and Oribasius.\textsuperscript{378}

Julian was not attempting to emulate Alexander the Great’s invasion despite what some may say.\textsuperscript{379} There are letters of Julian to his friends that show he was planning to leave in early spring of 363 and return by that same fall. No, this was a quick “blitzkrieg” to try to force the Persians into peace terms. Julian wrote in his \textit{Oration VIII: To Sallust}, “Alexander, ever despising what he had and longing for what he had not, could never be content… I on the

\textsuperscript{376} \textit{Lorica} is a breastplate or corselet.

\textsuperscript{377} Ammianus Marcellinus 25.3.2-6.

\textsuperscript{378} Ammianus Marcellinus 25.3.23. Julian according to both Ammianus and Libanius never cried out what Christian propaganda has claimed, “Helios, thou hast ruined me!” Sozomen 6.2 Retells this as one of Julian’s last moments.

\textsuperscript{379} Socrates 3.21 It is through Socrates’ writings that we have this notion that Julian was trying to emulate Alexander. Julian was not trying to follow in Alexander’s footsteps rather trying to gain back the lands such as Amida, Nisibis, Singara, Roman Armenia and lands west of the Tigris river that the Persians had taken. Julian did respect Alexander for his generalship but had little praise for the Macedonian. In his \textit{Panegyric In Honor of Constatius} 46A-B, Julian calls Alexander a insolent, obnoxious son who had no respect for his father, Philip. He goes on to say that Alexander treats his friends and generals worse than prisoners of war. Julian \textit{Letter to Themistius}, 257A-B and 264C-D. Julian wrote to his friend Themistius that Alexander “himself was more cruel and more insolent than Darius and Xerxes.” He continued, “there was a time when I believed that I ought to try and rival men who have been most distinguished for excellence, Alexander, for instance…I convinced myself that I preferred a life of leisure, I gladly recalled the Attic manner of living, and thought myself to be in sweet accord with you who are my friends.” Julian \textit{Letter to Themistius}, 253B-C.
contrary can always be content with what I have and am the last to covet what I have not."380

This was not a war of expansion but a war meant to take back the cities, which Shapur II had taken during the final sickness of Constantine and under his son Constantius.

It was Julian’s disputes and disagreements with the Christians that would define his reign. From letters and his writings, it is clear that the Christians were nothing to Julian but a thorn in his side. He received criticism from the Christians only years after he had died. Christians, saw Julian’s laws, edicts and renovation projects as things that were meant to destroy them and their faith. This is simply not true. As stated above, Julian enacted and pursued things for the betterment of the empire. Unlike his “Christian” cousin Constantius, who forbade public sacrifices in 341, Julian did not persecute the Christians and did not forbid them from practicing their faith.381 Julian in his Letter to the Citizens of Bostra wrote, “For those who had been banished have had their exile remitted… their property confiscated have been allowed by a law of mine to recover all their possessions.” He continued on to state, “Those of you who have wandered should not persecute those who worship the gods correctly…nor should those of you who worship the gods persecute, or plunder the houses of, those who have wandered.”382 The one law aimed at Christians was the edict in 362 against Christians teaching the pagan classics. Targeting Christians in this way was common sense to a philosopher like Julian. This did not end the education of Christians but specifically stated that Christians were not to teach something in which they did not believe.

380 Julian Oration VIII: To Sallust, 251A-C.

381 Theodosian Code 16.10.2. Those who performed sacrifices were to be condemned to death and their property was forfeited to the State. Also included, the provincial governors that failed to carry out the laws were subject to the same penalties; Julian, Letter to the Citizens of Bostra, 435D-438B. Julian writes how he allowed both pagan and Christian worship.

382 Julian, Letter to the Citizens of Bostra, 435D-438B.
Julian’s short reign is important to study because he had such an important impact not only on the Roman Empire but on the Christian faith as a whole. The Christian sects such as the Donatists and the Novatianists were recalled and able to practice freely and not worry about being persecuted like they had been under the previous emperor Constantius II. The experiences that Julian had to deal with in relating to his family being killed by Christians, then being sent into exile, his too “literal” Christian education and his constant and very realistic fear of being executed by his cousin would all prove to be a lasting factor of how he would turn out as a person with power. Finally, his meeting with pagan intellectuals would be crucial in influencing Julian. Julian continued his education under pagan intellectuals and it was through the pagans that he ultimately turned away from Christianity. Julian took the reforms, projects and experiences he learned from and through his education and experience brings that to his rule as sole emperor. Julian was and is still an important historical figure who is relevant not only to ancient Rome but also to the study of early Christianity.

APPENDIX A

GLOSSARY
Agens in rebus- Imperial agent. Often used as domestic spies under the Emperor Constantine and sons.

Augustus- Senior Emperor.

Caesar- Junior Emperor.

Comes- although this means “companion” this came to mean “Count” that was a high ranking military official. Ranked below the magistri militum.

Comes civitatis- a city administrator. “Count of the City.”

Comes domesticorum- commander of the imperial bodyguards. “Count of the Domestics.”

Comes rei privatae- the imperial finance minister.

Comes sacrarum largitionum- “Count of the Sacred Largesses,” another imperial finance minister.

Comitatus- was the entourage of the emperor.

Comitatenses- the late Roman field army, consisting of both cavalry and infantry units, the vexillations and legions.

Consiliarius- one of the royal counselors.

Consul- Two “consuls” that were elected each year and the year was named after them.

Consularis- a provincial governor that was of intermediate rank.

Cura Palatii- an imperial official who was in charge of taking care of the imperial grounds.

Curialis- a town councilor and member of the local senate.

Cursus Publicus- meaning “public way.” Was the Roman government run courier and transportation system. Was abused under Constantine and sons. Improved later under Julian.

Decurion- higher ranked local senator. Was wealthier and title carried more prestige.

Delator- informer.

Domesticus- one of the imperial body guards or a guard for the royal court.

Dux- General.

Foederati- Allied barbarian tribes obliged to provide military service to the emperor. Usually served in their own units under their own commanders that held Roman rank. Crucial to the success of Constantine, Constantius, and Julian.
**Foedus**- a treaty between Rome and another state, or tribe. The treaty could be made during times of peace but was enacted more commonly during times of war.

**Gentiles**- non Romans, free tribes living outside the empire. Can also be tribes that have settled in Roman territory.

**Laeti**- Term that refers to groups of barbarians settled by the emperor on the land in the provinces under the terms of the tribes providing troops for the Roman army.

**Legatus**- a royal or imperial ambassador or representative. A subordinate officer who held delegated *imperium* rather than exercising power of his own.

**Legion**- term originally meaning levy, the legions became the main fighting unit of the Roman army for much of its existence. The legions were mainly composed as infantry, that were in four to five thousand men. The later empire saw a decline in the legion only consisting of one thousand men.

**Lorica**- A corselet of breastplate. This was very important because Julian rushed off to battle leaving behind his *lorica*. There were three types of *lorica*. *Lorica hamata*, *Lorica squamata* and *lorica segmentata*.

**Magister Equitum**- “Master of Horse,” an imperial general. Title given to senior officers of the later Imperial army. Was equal in status to *Magistri peditum*.

**Magister Militum**- “Master of Soldiers,” an imperial general. Senior officers in later Imperial army.

**Magister Officium**- “Master of Offices,” ranking title of overseer.

**Magister Peditum**- “Master of Foot,” an imperial general.

**Magister Utriusque Militiae**- “Master of Both Services,” an imperial general.

**Maior Domus**- “Mayor of the palace” or a royal court official.

**Novus Homo**- “New Man” that has come to the position of high rank.

**Optimus, Optimates**- Best man or Best of men.

**Palatinus**- Imperial court official.

**Praefectus Praetorio**- “Praetorian Prefect” overseer of several provinces.

**Praefectus Urbi**- “Prefect of the City”

**Praefecture**- Administrative unit of more than one diocese.

**Proconsul**- Highest ranking provincial governor.
**Protector et Domesticus** - Member of the imperial bodyguard.

**Quaestor sacri Palati** - “Quaestor of the Sacred Palace.”

**Scholasticus** - Scribe.

**Senator** - A Roman aristocrat.

**Testudo** - The renowned “tortoise” formation in which the Roman legionaries overlapped their long shields to provide full protection to the front, sides and overhead. It was most commonly used to approach an enemy fortifications.

**Vexillation** - a detachment of troops drawn from an auxiliary unit or legion.
APPENDIX B

MAPS AND FAMILY TREES
Figure B.1. Map taken from Shaun Tougher, *Julian the Apostate*, 15
Figure B.2. Family Tree taken from Shaun Tougher, Julian the Apostate, 14.
Figure B.3. Family Tree taken from R.W. Burgess, “Summer of Blood: The “Great Massacre” of 337 and the Promotion of the Sons of Constantine.” 6
Figure B.5. Gaul in Late Antiquity. Map taken from Shaun Tougher, *Julian the Apostate*, 16.
Figure B.6. Map taken from Robert Browning, *The Emperor Julian*, 245.
Battle Of Argentoratum, AD 357

Figure B.7. Map taken from Strategy and Tactics Magazine #266, 13.
Figure B.8. Map taken from http://www.kavehfarrokh.com/iranica/sassanian-era/sassanian-history-in-maps/ Accessed 4-10-14
APPENDIX C

CHRONOLOGY OF FLAVIUS CLAUDIUS JULIANUS
May, 331/332---Flavius Claudius Julianus, son of Julius Constantius and Basilinia. Born in Constantinople. (Ammianus Marcellinus 22.9.2; Libanius 18.9.)

332---Death of Basilina (Julian, Misopogon, 352B.)

May 22, 337---Death of Constantine the Great. (Eusebius Life of Constantine, 4.61.)

August/September, 337---Julian and Gallus (half-brother) were sole survivors of a massacre by the soldier of the male relatives of Constantine. This massacre was probably started or instigated by Constantius II. (Julian, Letter to the Athenians, 270C-D; Eunapius, Lives of the Sophist, 7.1.6; Libanius, Orations, 18.10; Gregory Nazianzus, Oration 4, 21.)

337-341---Julian sent to his mother’s family and was tutored and started his education under Eusebius an Arian bishop of Nicomedia. (Ammianus Marcellinus 22.9.4; Sozomen Ecclesiastical History, 5.2.)

339---Eusebius was granted the title of Bishop of Constantinople and Julian travels with him back to the capital. (Socrates, Ecclesiastical History, 2.7; Sozomen, Ecclesiastical History, 2.4.3.)

338/339---Mardonius becomes Julian’s tutor. Mardonius, a eunuch and former teacher of his mother, Basilina. Would have a strong influence on the young prince and his studies (Julian, Letter to the Athenians, 274D; Julian, Misopogon, 20-22; Libanius, Orations, 18.11.)

341/342---Julian and half-brother Gallus were exiled to live on the imperial estate at Macellum in Cappadocia. (Julian, Letter to the Athenians, 271B; Ammianus Marcellinus 15.2.7; Sozomen 5.2. see also 9-10.)

347---Gallus is summoned to the imperial court and Julian returns to Constantinople. Julian attends classes and is taught by Nicoles (Rhetoric) and Hecebolius the sophist. (Libanius, Orations, 15.27 and Orations, 18. 12; Julian, Misopogon, 353B.)

347---Julian is sent back to Nicomedia with Hecebolius and it was here that he came in contact with Libanius the famous pagan philosopher. Julian was not allowed to attend Libanius’ lectures but paid for written copies of them. (Libanius, Orations, 13.10-11 and Orations, 18.13-15; Socrates 3.1.13-15.)

350---Usurpation of Magnentius and the death of Constans. (Zosimos 2.42.3-5; Julian, Panegyric In Honor of Constantius, 26B-D and see Oration II-The Heroic deeds of the Emperor Constantius, 55D.)

March, 351---Gallus is elevated to the rank of Caesar by his cousin Constantius II. (Ammianus Marcellinus 14.1.1.)

351---Julian comes in contact with pagan philosophers and theurgist and secretly converts to paganism. (Julian, Letter to Maximus Number 8.)

September 28th, 351---Constantius II defeats Magnentius at the Battle of Mursa. (Julian, Oration-In Honor of Constantius, 35D-37A.)
353---Magnentius commits suicide after the Battle of Mons Seleucus. (Julian, *Oration.I*, 40B.)


354---Julian starts corresponding with the philosopher Libanius and Themistius. (Julian, *Letter to Themistius*, 259D.)

355---Usurpation and revolt of Silvanius. (Ammianus Marcellinus 15.5.1-35.)

May, 355---Julian is granted permission to continue his studies in Athens (Julian, *Letter to the Athenians*, 273D and 275A; *Oration III- Panegyric in Honor of the Empress Eusebia*, 118C-119D; Libanius, *Oration* 18.27-30.)

November 6th, 355---Julian was proclaimed Caesar by Constantius. Married Constantius’ sister Helena. (Julian, *Letter to the Athenians*, 274A-277D; Libanius, *Oration* 18.32-39; Ammianus Marcellinus 15.8.5-18.)

December 1st, 355---Julian was sent to Gaul with a small escort and stationed in Vienne. (Ammianus Marcellinus 15.8.8-19; Libanius, *Oration* 18.42-44.)

January 1st, 356---Constantius makes Julian consul. (Ammianus Marcellinus 16.1.1.)

356---Julian’s first campaign in Gaul (vs.Alamanni) Julian wins a victory at Rheims, retakes Cologne and winters at Sens where he manages to hold out and be victorious against a month long besiegement. (Ammianus Marcellinus 16.2-4; Libanius *Oration* 18.48.)

---Julian composed his first panegyric to Constantius (*Oration I. Panegyric in Honor of the Emperor Constantius*) which was given by Julian’s chamberlain Eutherius, who presented this in Milan for defense of Julian. Julian was defending being charged with insubordination. (Ammianus Marcellinus 16.7.2-3) Panegyric on the empress Eusebia was written during the same time.

April, 357---Constantius visits Rome. First visit of an emperor in 32 years. Last visit was his father Constantine the Great. (Ammianus Marcellinus 16.10.9-17.)

August 25th, 357---Julian conducts his second campaign while stationed in Gaul. Julian wins crucial victory at Battle of Strasbourg capturing Chnodomarius, one of kings of the Alamanni. Sends Chnodomarius to Constantius as war prize and then crosses the Rhine at Mayence and repairs defences along the river. (Ammianus Marcellinus 16.11.1, 17.3.6; Julian, *Letter to the Athenians*, 278B-D; Libanius, *Oration* 18.49-74.)

358---Julian composed second panegyric to Constantius II. *Oration II. The Heroic Deeds of the Emperor Constantius*.

358---Summer, Julian sets out on third campaign in Gaul. Continues success with victories over the Salian Franks and then the Chamavi. (Julian, *Letter to the Athenians*, 280A; Ammianus Marcellinus 17.8.1.)
358---Nicomedia is destroyed by an earthquake. (Ammianus Marcellinus 17.7.1-8.)

358---Winter, Julian’s advisor Salutius is recalled due to jealousy of Constantius II. (Julian, Letter to the Athenians, 281D and 282C; Libanius, Oration 12.58 and 18.85.)

359---Julian’s fourth campaign against the barbarians. Arranged for shipments of goods from Britain, was able to repair the walls of the fortresses along the Rhine and defeated hostile parts of Alamannia. (Ammianus Marcellinus 18. 2. 3-9.)

October, 359---the important city Amida falls to Shapur II after 73 day siege. (Ammianus Marcellinus 18. 9.-19.8.)

359---Julian in Paris and Constantius II is stationed in Constantinople (Ammianus Marcellinus 20.1.1.)

360---Julian sends general Lupicinus to Britain to fight the Picts and Scots. Death of Empress Eusebia. (Ammianus Marcellinus 20.1.2-3) (Ammianus Marcellinus 21.6.4.)

February, 360---Julian is proclaimed Augustus by his troops who refused to be transferred to the Eastern Front. Julian tries to refuse but gives way after sign by Zeus. (Julian, Letter to the Athenians, 282B-D, Libanius, Oration, 12.58-61 and 18.90-102; Ammianus Marcellinus 20.4.1-3.)

360---Julian’s wife Helena dies. (Ammianus Marcellinus 21.1.5; Libanius, Oration, 18.179.)

February, 360---Julian sends both Pentadius and Eutherius as envoys to Constantius II for peace and negotiations. (Ammianus Marcellinus 20.8.19.)

April, 360---Constantius leaves Constantinople and meets with Julian’s envoys and dispatches his envoy Leonas. (Libanius, Oration, 18.126.)

June-August, 360---Julian continues campaigns while waiting for peace negotiations. Julian goes after the Attuararian Franks. (Ammianus Marcellinus 20.7.17-18.)

October, 360---Julian celebrates the quinquennalia of his first position of power as Caesar and assumed the diadem. (Ammianus Marcellinus 21.1.1-4.)

361---Julian captures Vadomarius (king of Alamanni) Finds out the king was being paid by Constantius II to conduct raids on Julian and the army of the West. (Julian, Letter to the Athenians, 286A; Libanius, Oration, 12.62 and 18.107-108; Ammianus Marcellinus 21.5.2-8.)

361---Julian addresses his troops stating that he will defend his new position with force. (Ammianus Marcellinus 21.8.9.)

361---Julian takes Sirimum (Libanius 18.111-112), Succi Pass (Ammianus Marcellinus 21.10.1), and Naissus (Ammianus Marcellinus 21.10.5.)
November-3rd, 361---Constantius dies at Mopsucrena while on his way to confront Julian in civil war. (Ammianus Marcellinus 21.15.2-3; Libanius, Oration, 18.117.)

December-11th, 361---Julian enters Constantinople.

June-17th, 362---Julian issues the edict against Christian teachers. (Theodosian Code 13.3.5.)

362---Julian goes to the town of Antioch. (Ammianus Marcellinus 22.9.15.)

363---January- Julian writes and post his work against the people of Antioch, Misopogon. (Tougher, Julian the Apostate, 97.)

March 5th, 363---Julian departs Antioch and heads on his campaign against the Persians. (Libanius, Autobiography, 131.)

June 26th, 363---Flavius Claudius Julianus dies of a spear wound. (Ammianus Marcellinus 25.3.1-23.)

384 Tougher, Julian the Apostate; Lieu, The Emperor Julian; Browning, The Emperor Julian as well as all of the ancient sources cited were used for this chronology of Julian.
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