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Vetranio's revenge? The rhetorical prowess of Ammianus' Constantius

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This paper revisits a neglected aspect of Ammianus Marcellinus' representation of political discourse. Scholars have frequently remarked that Ammianus dutifully follows his predecessors in Latin grand-style historiography by representing formal speeches in *oratio recta*. Yet in comparison with Sallust, Livy, and Tacitus, these speeches are severely limited in terms of frequency, occasion, and speaker. Excluding incidental instances of *oratio recta*, only twelve speeches remain in the extant text, and these are all placed in the mouths of imperial figures and delivered to military audiences. The conventional explanation for such limitation is perfectly adequate, so far as it goes: when compared with the days of the Republic or even the early Principate, the scope of deliberative oratory in the fourth century had been severely curtailed. It stands to reason, then, that a polity in which ultimate authority had been vested in the figure of the emperor, and in which deliberative oratory had been seriously displaced from its former role, would produce in its last great historian a narrative reflective of that reality.[1] What does *not* follow from this truism is that Ammianus' speeches are merely ossified vestiges of the old historiography, preserved only as decrepit signposts of a classical genre Ammianus slavishly imitates.

In line with the larger movement to evaluate late-antique culture on its own terms rather than those of the Classical past, recent scholarship has begun to explore

1 For general comments see, for example, Laistner 1966, p. 149-151; general as well specific comments and interpretations are to be found in Matthews 1989 (see index under "Ammianus Marcellinus: treatment of 'letters' and speeches"); Sabbah 1978, p. 430-32. There is a brief monograph, Pighi 1936. The present author's doctoral dissertation (O'Brien 2002) is the most recent scholarly work devoted to the subject. The following argument is based in part on material presented there.

the sophistication of Ammianus' rhetoric in his representation of a post-classical world.[2] I contend that Ammianus' speeches are prime exhibits of his idiosyncratic deployment of rhetoric to serve contemporary representation. If we read the historian's speeches as autonomously creative responses to traditional models, they will yield many more interpretative possibilities than has been assumed. The four speeches Ammianus assigns to the Emperor Constantius provide an especially interesting test-case for this hypothesis. A much-maligned emperor in the *Res Gestae*, Constantius' speeches provide not only a variety of instances in which to examine Ammianus' representation of imperial speeches as effective political discourse, but also a more dynamic and subtle portrait of the man than is customarily allowed. The latter part of this paper examines the four speeches of Constantius in the extant text in order to demonstrate that Ammianus invents a specialized "Constantian" rhetoric which both enriches his characterization of that emperor, and helps to crystalize the historian's ideology of the imperial office. Before turning to these speeches, however, it will be useful to set the communicative act portrayed in Ammianus' imperial *adlocutiones* more broadly within the aesthetic and social context of the fourth century.

Representing imperial *adlocutio* in late-antique art and narrative

The form of communication that Ammianus represents in his imperial speeches developed in the same cultural matrix in which Ammianus forged his unique style. Reading the speeches as instances of effective political communication depends to some extent on understanding the compositional mode Ammianus created to communicate this phenomenon. Because of his generic isolation and highly personal idiom, Ammianus has always been a challenge to readers who seek to reconcile historical form and historiographical substance. Gibbon's chestnut characterization of the "accurate and faithful guide" encumbered by "the vices of his style" ("inflated eloquence;" "superfluous prolixity;" "bad taste") has been influential, but it unnaturally divorced two aspects of the historian's work.[3] By now, Gibbon's radical dualism has come to serve as a salutary challenge for scholars aware that Ammianus' subtly manipulative prose often makes his narrative far more tendentious than it is naively transparent.

2 For a fine overview of the *status quaestionis*, see Blockley 1996. Matthews 1989 and Barnes 1998 stake out important positions on the relationship of rhetoric and reality; more recently, see Kelly 2008.

3 Gibbon 1994, ch. 19 n. 74; ch. 26 n. 65; ch. 26 n. 1.

In 1948, Erich Auerbach presented the most robust reversal to date of the view that whatever Ammianus achieves in the realm of verisimilitude, he achieves in *spite* of his style, not because of it.[4] His famous chapter on Ammianus both appreciated the historian's powerful and effective rhetoric, and linked it to the social realities of Ammianus' world. Significantly for present purposes, Auerbach's study of style and representation was focused precisely on an instance of political discourse, namely the famous urban rioting scene in Amm. 15.7, where the urban prefect of Rome Leontius quells a riotous crowd without words. Leontius' mere presence (aided too by his exemplary public flogging of the contumelious rabble-rouser, Petrus Valuomeres) is enough to communicate his authority and to achieve calm. No matter that Auerbach considered Ammianus' fourth-century Rome to be a bankrupt declination from a Classical ideal. In his reading of the Leontius scene, he argued that Ammianus had developed a literary language apt for describing late Roman social relations, even if he did think that the connection between ruler and ruled was "only a physical relation based on magic and brute force."[5] Though John Matthews had to correct Auerbach's essentially negative and reductive assumptions about communication between governing and governed classes,[6] a persuasive account of the historian's creative autonomy had been made. Since Auerbach, it has become increasingly possible to integrate style and representation without entertaining distracting prejudices of decline.

Ammianus' speeches respond remarkably well to reading from this new critical approach, though few have taken advantage of the opportunity. In the first place, we can admit that there is verisimilitude even in Ammianus' jealous limitation of speeches to emperors delivering the military *adlocutio.* These occasions were in fact the exclusive prerogative of emperors in Ammianus' day. As isolated, yet distinct moments in his narrative account of the fourth-century world, the sporadic appearance of imperial speeches allows Ammianus to portray the directors of human affairs in the late Roman cosmos in a way that is both aesthetically and ideologically appropriate.

Failure to recognize this adequacy of representation has blinkered readers to the scope and function of speeches in Ammianus. Not just their relative infrequency and limited occasion, but their very mode of execution has led to easy dismissal of their importance. Ammianus invariably introduces and concludes his speeches with highly

4 Auerbach 1953.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 52.

6 Matthews 1987.

stereotypical descriptions of the ceremonial activity surrounding the oratorical moment. Such descriptions range from the mode and quality of imperial procession to the speaking platform, the imperial physiognomy at the beginning, to the acclamations and other gestures of approval or disapproval amongst the audience at the end.[7] The classicizing expectations of the few who have singled out Ammianus' speeches for comment at all have generally led them to see the programmatic ceremonial descriptions that bracket the *oratio recta* as the final seal of irrelevance.[8] Yet Auerbach's analysis was built on the observation that non-verbal forms of communication could be effective, and at least since Sabine MacCormack's work on the importance of ceremonial communication in the late antique polity, it has become extremely difficult to dismiss Ammianus' presentations of ceremonial speech out of hand.[9] By rendering it in text, Ammianus has done nothing less than preserve for posterity a specialized type of fourth-century ceremony, in which subtle variation of detail discloses crucial differences for interpretation. He furthermore artfully combines ritualistic gesture and spoken words in a meaningful amalgam. For convenience, I call this unique form the "speech-scene." While it is difficult to find fully comparable contemporary textual representations of these scenes, there are very fruitful visual *comparanda* to be found in the public art of Ammianus' Rome.

When Ernst Kitzinger attempted to explain the alleged primitivistic simplicity of certain public artworks in Late Antiquity, he turned his eye to the different modes of portraying *adlocutio* on the columns of Trajan (AD 113) and of Marcus Aurelius (AD 180-93), both of which monuments are chronologically close and within ready proximity to each other in Rome.[10] The differences Kitzinger isolated are those which encode an increasing focus on the figure of the emperor by increasing his centrality in the overall composition, by depicting him *en face*, and by elevating him above the level of his listeners. The asymmetries of the earlier scene capture the emperor's more naturalistic and autonomous pose, and introduce a reciprocal rhythm between the speaker and his audience that reflects the ideal of the citizen *princeps* still alive in Trajan's regime. In Aurelius' scene, by contrast, we see a moment where communication between ruler and

7 den Boeft *et al.*, 1987, p. 113-14 outline the common formulaic ingredients of Ammianus' speech-scenes. For a conspectus of these elements in the speeches under consideration here, see the appendix at the end of this article.

8 *E.g.*, Laistner 1966, p. 150

9 MacCormack 1981.

10 Kitzinger 1977, p. 7-18.

ruled is clearly represented, but in which visual elevation is symbolic of his increasingly hierarchical isolation.

If there is an evolutionary process here, it is echoed and finally consummated in the radical stylistic difference evident within the several *adlocutio* scenes on the nearby Arch of Constantine (AD 315), whose attic *adlocutio* panels despoiled from the age of Aurelian provide a famous contrast in styles with the contemporary Constantinian frieze depicting the same ceremony in the Roman forum. Here centrality, elevation, social stratification, and hierarchy are rendered with an almost geometric rigidity. In the relative "primitivism" of the Constantinian relief 's execution, there is also a tendency toward abstract symbolic meaning. In this very fact, though, it is clear that the relief is very deeply *about* the emperor 's communication with his public. Not only is the frieze at a lower height and therefore more accessible to those walking under the Arch. It and its companion *largitio* frieze seem to make an unabashed ideological point by standing in frank juxtaposition with medallions and panels despoiled from earlier monuments. The designer includes classical representations of the emperors alongside the post-classical ones, and thus invites his viewers into a self-conscious dialogue about traditional imperial power in evolution. Such an official commission can hardly be dismissed as a hapless *mélange* of styles and scenes. It must instead be a monument which, for its very placement near the heart of the city, its very focus on the public persona of the fourth century emperor, is expressly designed to promulgate an ideology of effective communication between the emperor and his subjects.[11]

The aesthetic and representational programme of the Arch (which, along with the monuments of Trajan and Marcus, he must have known) makes it a fine analogue in sculpture for Ammianus' historiographical art, especially with regard to the imperial communicative act as represented in the *adlocutio.* Just as the Arch builds upon a genetic connection between contemporary imperial *adlocutio* and that of the high empire, the actual oratorical substance of Ammianus' speech-scenes hearkens back to classical styles; at the same time, in their relative straightforwardness of syntax and diction, the speeches contrast with the sometimes florid style of the narrative.[12] And as with the Constantinian tableau of the emperor addressing the populace, an exclusivist classicizing perspective will be tempted to read Ammianus' simplicity of execution as a limit on interpretability. But the iconographical programme of the Arch can be applied analogically to Ammianus'

11 On spoliation and the programme of imperial ideology on the Arch, see Elsner 2000.

12 On this contrast, see Fontaine 1992, p. 33.

narrative. Because of their relative isolation, the speech-scenes stand as prominent monuments on his literary landscape, like arches or columns in the city's ways, reminding the reader of the place of the emperor in the Roman world, their emphatic formal similarities invite comparison one with the other across narrative distances. The analogy of the ceremonial moment as captured in plastic art could even be taken a step further by considering them as species of literary *ecphrasis*, in which a work of art is described in narrative in such a way as to prompt reflection on the semantic relation between imagined visual object and the literary artifice in which it is embedded.[13]

Constantius' *adlocutio* at 14.10.10: *veritatis enim absoluta semper ratio est et simplex*: rhetorical imbalance and dramatic irony[14]

Ammianus' representation of the emperor Constantius in the four *adlocutiones* he allots to him in our extant text provides an especially good demonstration of how the speech-scene functions in his narrative. These scenes simultaneously isolate a vital moment of political discourse and afford a subtle mode of characterization. In historiography, as in monumental architecture, formal representation of speech encodes objective criteria of imperial legitimacy – indeed, the very fact that Constantius receives so many formal *adlocutiones* cast in *oratio recta* is to some degree indicative of his power in Ammianus' world. *Adlocutio* was a prerogative only of emperors of Augustan rank, a convention which Ammianus scrupulously observes when on two occasions he represents speeches of a lesser degree of ceremony in the mouths of Caesars.[15] Usurpers and even some Augusti, such as Valens and Jovian, both held in low esteem by Ammianus, receive no formal speeches at all.[16]

But in addition to objective legitimacy, *adlocutio* in Ammianus' hands also serves as a yardstick for his assessment of subjective merit. One reason why Ammianus' Constantian speeches are such good test cases is because in them the contrast between legitimacy and merit is likely to be so high: Ammianus is very well known for his loathing of Constantius, whom he frequently portrays, to use Timothy Barnes' phrase, as a "text-book

13 Further, the participation of the speaker within a visual ceremony within the narrative could allow interpretation according to a theory of "performative *ecphrasis*" recently proposed for the reading of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (Johnson 2009, p. 27-29). The expanding bibliography on *ecphrasis* has not yet extended to Ammianus.

14 All quotations and citations of Ammianus are from the Teubner edition of Seyfarth 1977.

15 Gallus at 14.7.3; Julian at 16.12.9.

16 See Szidat 1977, p. 166.

tyrant;" yet he never disputes his legitimacy, at least in the extant books.[17] Constantius' speeches pique further attention because Ammianus indirectly calls attention to them in his obituary notice of the emperor, where he criticizes him for his rhetorical obtuseness.[18] This account is in some measure belied by the emperor's prominent oratorical presence in the narrative, not to mention with other contemporary testimonials praising the emperor for – of all things – eloquence. Several sources, most notably an early panegyric of Julian, attribute to Constantius the remarkable feat of persuading the usurper Vetranio to abdicate in 350 by dint of eloquence alone.[19] The ancient contemporary accounts of a different Constantius, though they are from less authoritative sources than Ammianus' history, are of a kind with more recent reevaluations of the emperor's character by scholars aware of Ammianus' capacity to create a tendentious narrative.

The four speech-scenes span the life of Constantius in the remaining books of the *Res Gestae* and depict him in discrete moments from his career as sole Augustus soon after the defeat of Magnentius in 353. We have a battlefield speech marking the end of a barbarian campaign in 354 (14.10.10-16), a speech marking the ceremony elevating Julian to the Caesareate in 355 (15.8.1-17), another oration on the field to mark the end of the Sarmatian campaign of 357 (17.13.24-34), and, finally, a military harangue inaugurating his never-completed campaign against his embittered rival Julian Augustus in 360 (21.13.9-16). Qualitatively distinct from the surrounding narrative as they are, imperial *adlocutiones* invite comparison one with the other, allowing us to ascertain a "Constantian rhetoric." Recognizing its tone and modes allows us to distinguish between subjective merit and the objective legitimacy encoded in the speech-scenes. Indeed, this discrepancy is evident in the first speech attributed to Constantius in the extant text.

At 14.10.10, Constantius delivers a speech in Augusta Raurica to mark the conclusion of his campaign against the Alamanni in 354. The occasion is not, strictly speaking, a victory, since the emperor has agreed to a negotiated peace after suspected

17 Barnes 1998, p. 138.

18 *Doctrinarum diligens adfectator, sed cum a rhetorica per ingenium desereretur obtunsum, ad versificandum transgressus, nihil operae pretium fecit* (Amm. 21.16.4).

19 Julian, *Or.* 1.31 C-32A; see also *Or.* 2.76A-78D. Aurelius Victor (*Caes.* 42.23) also credits the emperor good oratorical skills and relates the account of Vetranio's abdication (42.1); Themistius too mentions it (*Or.* 2.37B). Teitler 1992, 117-122, calls for a re-evaluation of Constantius' literary accomplishments by a close study of the mere three pieces extant (three letters in Latin, one in Greek translation). As Teitler himself acknowledges, however, this would be an extremely difficult undertaking, given the paucity of material and the fact that there is no way to verify whether the letters actually came from Constantius' hand or if they were written for him by a scribe. No one to date has taken him up on the challenge.

fraternization between the enemy and high ranking Roman officers of local origin robs his army of a decisive engagement. Nevertheless, the speech puts a bold face on the situation, urging the expediency of such a peace with some plausibility.

Like all of the *adlocutiones* in the *Res Gestae*, this one is introduced (14.10.10) by the "tribunal introduction," a brief description of the ceremonial gathering of troops *(advocato in contionem exercitu)*, the emperor's location on the speaking platform, *(imperator pro tempore pauca dicturus, tribunal adsistens)* and a reference to his manner of speaking, here including a rare overt reference to the fact that the words represented in direct speech may not be reported precisely as they were spoken *(ad hunc disseruit modum)*. In comparison with the introductions to some other *adlocutiones*, this one is conspicuously barren of details that give symbolic clues as to the speaker's confidence and underlying motives.[20] Ammianus' habitual description of the ceremonial conclusion of the speech, accounting for the audience's reception, is also rather straightforward. Perhaps this is to lay special emphasis on Ammianus' speculation on *why* the army, to whom Constantius referred his proposed peace *tamquam arbitros*, choose to do so. They do it not, Ammianus tells us, because they are thoroughly persuaded by any of the arguments that have been advanced, but rather "moved... by the knowledge acquired in several campaigns that it was only in civil strife that the emperor's personal *fortuna* kept a watchful eye on him, and that his foreign wars had generally ended in disaster (14.10.16)."

Ammianus' editorial intrusion embellishes the formulaic element of audience response, acting as a significant and noticeable variation. It casts doubt on the autonomy and persuasiveness of Constantius as an orator, not to mention on his standing as a capable general. The speech-scene thus neatly isolates a devastating disjunction of rhetoric and action. At the same time, the fictive bubble that renders the speech distinct from the narrative proper is burst, and, led by the soldiers' interior lights, readers recognize that the oration is shot through with statements that resonate ironically with those of Ammianus' own critical reportage of Constantius elsewhere.[21]

The speech opens with an *exordium* (14.10.11-13) in which the emperor effects a plausible *captatio benevolentiae* by acknowledging his audience's soldierly interests and comparing them with his own. In his prescribed promise to be brief (*accipite aequis*

20 As, for example, at 20.5.1 and 21.13.10, on which, see below.

21 Ammianus' explicit comments on this aspect of Constantius' personal *fortuna* occur at 14.10.16, 20.11.32, and 21.16.15.

auribus quae succintius explicabo) he unwittingly calls attention to the relative length of the *exordium* compared to the other, relatively brief, sections of the speech.[22] This very imbalance seems to intimate the prevalence of form over substance. In any case, there are numerous points in which mere diction summons up a suspicious intratext. For example, Constantius' description of his duties as the *alienae custos salutis* (14.10.12) is certainly appropriate to Ammianus' view of the imperial office, which in turn seems to be in basic accord with the views of many of his Latin contemporaries.[23] Yet in this emperor's mouth and at this point in the narrative, the truism cannot fail to recall a striking earlier passage in which Ammianus comments on the character of Constantius as a ruler. At 14.5.4-5, where he is reporting Constantius' purges of defeated Magnentians, Ammianus says that the emperor did indeed equate his own health with the safety of the empire – but in a disproportionate, inappropriate way. According to the historian the *cruentae blanditiae* of some of Constantius' advisors played on his harsh anger (*asperitas*), his irascibility (*iracundia*), and his unfounded suspicions (*vanitas suspicionum*) to convince him that the state of the entire world hung on his safety as if from a thread.[24] This vivid evocation of a paranoiac monarch subject to the whims of a palace clique lurks behind the ideal of rule as expressed by Constantius himself later in the speech. Evident here is a discrepancy between Ammianus' presentation of the emperor as he sees himself and how the historian would have us see him. This discrepancy leaves the reader with the abiding sense that Constantius does not personally live up to the ideal of selfless and controlled state custodianship that he projects; rather, the portrait of Constantius' egocentricity inverts this perfect model.[25]

Constantius claims at 14.10.14 to be a *cunctator et cautus utiliumque monitor.* The phrase is fraught with overtones from previous portions of the narrative that give the speaker's words a meaning other than what he presumably intended. In the first

22 Pighi 1936, p. 13-19 discusses Constantius' speech at 14.10.10. His characterization of Constantius' style is that the inordinate and awkward length of the *exordium* makes for an unbalanced speech in which the actual proposals are out of proportion with the excuses made for them.

23 Blockley 1975, p. 143 affirms this view, and further places Ammianus' conception of the emperor's powers and their limitations in the context of Hellenistic theories of absolutism. On the development of the fourth-century imperial ideology in light of barbarian threats, see Valensi 1957, p. 62-3.

24 *A cuius salute velut filo pendere statum orbis terrarum* (Amm., 14.5.4).

25 The notion of the idealized "constitutional" Roman monarch was traditionally opposed to the barbarian concept of *rex* or *tyrannus.* Ammianus is witness to the fact that the same distinctions pertained in the fourth century. See Blockley 1975, p. 150; Béranger 1976, p. 49-50.

instance, *cunctator* and *cautus* are inherently ambiguous terms, with the potential for negative associations. Seager notes that Ammianus' use of the terms in military contexts is usually positive,[26] but the negative light shed on Constantius' military prowess by Ammianus' comment at the end of the speech sanctions at least the possibility of an ironic interpretation of the terms as they appear in direct discourse.[27] The second half of the phrase, *utiliumque monitor*, would again seem to accord with a positive view of the general situation, inasmuch as the affair is settled with no loss of Roman blood. Yet Constantius' concern with what is *utile* here, in light of what has been said about his motivations, also turns back on his individual character the perverted sense of *custos salutis alienae.* In the peroration Constantius will likewise undermine his own high sense of dignity, by exposing his arguments in favour of what is *honestum* (which is the second of the two traditional topics of deliberate speech) to the examples of his own arrogance so memorably revealed in the narrative.

In the *conclusio* of his speech Constantius purports to effect his proposals by repeated variations on the notion of peacefulness, moderation, humility, and philanthropy as Roman and as imperial virtues:

> *In summa tamquam arbitros vos, quid suadetis, opperior ut princeps tranquillus temperanter adhibere modum allapsa felicitate decernens. non enim inertiae, sed modestiae humanitatique, mihi credite, hoc, quod recte consultum est, assignabitur* (14.10.15).

Tranquillus, *temperanter*, and *modum* in the first sentence all designate moderation, the recognition of rational limits to belligerent activity in the circumstances. Moderation in all of its forms is a keystone of ancient ethics, and Seager has shown that it is fundamental to Ammianus' characterization of persons within his history.[28] Constantius' use of the concept here is by no means far-fetched for the situation, and we see similar usages reported and commended by Ammianus in other passages, including some in which Constantius is the speaker or actor.[29] Nevertheless, even these basic terms of Roman morality are undermined by the historian's verbal and situational pendants to the emperor's claims to virtue earlier in the book.[30]

26 Seager 1986, p. 71.

27 *Ibid*., p. 74 notes that Ammianus does use the term with savage irony in Valentinian's obituary.

28 *Ibid*., p. 1-17.

29 *Ibid*., p. 1-3 cites several passages.

30 See Seager 1999, p. 580-81 for a brief analysis of the speech and how its description of the campaign corresponds with the details of the narrative (for the most part, to Constantius' detriment).

First, it is worth pointing out that the triad *tranquillus*, *temperanter*, and *modum* are adduced with an eye to the present fortune of the Roman position. The whole sentence is justified, as it were, by the circumstantial ablative absolute *allapsa felicitate*. Here Constantius' own invocation of the language of *fortuna*, again correct and effective within the confines of the speech, marks an unpropitious link to Ammianus' note on the emperor's guiding personal *fortuna* in the following sentence, further undermining the sincerity of the appeal.[31]

While the virtues of moderation and humanity are not altogether absent from Ammianus' depiction of Constantius in the whole of his extant work, they are not part of the narrative of book 14. In fact, their inclusion in the speech at 14.10 carries definite negative overtones and may be read in an ironic light. Seager identifies two words of vice that correspond most closely with *humanitas* in Ammianus' usage: *acerbitas* and *asperitas*,[32] both of which are applied to Constantius in this book. In judicial matters involving treason the emperor's *asperitas* was frequently provoked by his exaggerating and flattering courtiers. Giving in to them exposed his anger, suspicion, and pride, as noted above, and also intensified his stubbornness (*obstinatum propositum*, 14.5.5). It was a deadly vice (*exitiale vitium*, 14.5.5) that only grew with age. At 14.9.2 Ammianus reports a specific instance of it in the fortunes of Ursicinus. When sent for by Gallus to try cases of treason against himself, the *magister equitum* diligently sent back secret letters reporting the Caesar's irregular behavior to Constantius:

> *Sed cautela nimia in peiores haeserat plagas, ut narrabimus postea, aemulis consarcinantibus insidias graves apud Constantium, cetera medium principem, sed si quid auribus eius huiusmodi quivis infudisset ignotus, acerbum et inplacabilem et in hoc causarum titulo dissimilem sui.*

Ammianus both makes Constantius a mouthpiece of the imperial ideal, and trumps Constantius' rhetorical success by enfolding it in his own overarching rhetoric. The concluding line of the *exordium*, *veritatis enim absoluta semper ratio est et simplex* (14.10.13) might well be used as an ironic emblem of the complexity of Ammianus' inclusion of *oratio recta*, a signal that in reading the purported words of an individual figure within the narrative, we must be open to the possibilities of contradiction and subtle amendment on the part of the historiographer.

31 The language of moderation is itself extended by Constantius' final protestation that if the treaty terms are approved, peace will be attributed not to *inertia*, but to *modestas* and *humanitas*; an argument towards what is honorable. That Ammianus himself sees *humanitas* as a Roman virtue is evident from scattered comments throughout the *Res Gestae*. See the discussion and citations of Seager 1986, p. 20-21.

32 Seager 1986, p. 20.

Constantius' *adlocutio* at 15.8: Augustan legitimacy and the meritorious Caesar

Readers of Ammianus have never been in doubt that the emperor Julian (the Apostate) is his hero. The extent to which he figures as an exemplum of the imperial office continues to be investigated.[33] One function of his negative characterisation in book 14 is to anticipate Julian's appearance in the narrative in book 15, and thereafter, every detail of Constantius' behaviour must be measured against Julian's example, whether Ammianus signals the fact or not. Speeches are a crucial means of focussing that attention, because as the narrative develops, and Ammianus allows Julian himself to speak, the *adlocutio* scenes provide easily comparable moments of imperial self-presentation.[34] After book 14, much of what Ammianus has to say against Constantius is in direct anticipation of Julian, with whom he interacts increasingly. The next speech demonstrates the multifaceted possibilities of the Constantian speech-scene already developed in 14.10, but takes them in a slightly different direction suited to the introduction of a new, and in Ammianus' eyes, infinitely superior imperial figure. At 15.8, the standard *adlocutio* is adapted to the ceremonial of Caesarian accession, as Constantius elevates his young cousin Julian to imperial rank.

As in Constantius' first speech, the ratification of his decision by the army's acclamation is key to reading the event. In keeping with the ideological function of the scene, Ammianus ensures that there is no doubt as to Julian's objective imperial legitimacy: the three elements of *consensus omnium*, *viz.* the will of the Augustus, the will of the "people", and the will of the gods are duly represented. Constantius' own legitimacy as ruler is thus made crucial to Julian's own.[35] But by extending the technique of dividing objective legitimacy from subjective merit to a more complex ceremonial setting, the historian manages to increase his hero's merit by borrowing from Constantius own dwindling stock, and on unfavourable terms.

As in the *adlocutio* scene at 14.10, the ostensible plausibility of Constantius' words remains intact, just as his formal bearing remains dignified. Yet as at 14.10, the "voice" of the soldiery is allowed to speak in ways that play off the single-minded goal of the speech scene (we shall turn to these instances presently). Already well-practised

33 See, for example, Kelly 2008, p. 256-296.

34 Speeches delivered by Julian during Constantius' lifetime occur at 16.12.9-13, 20.5.1-9, and 21.5.1-11.

35 See MacCormack 1981, p. 164-5.

in the artful characterisation of Constantius, at 15.8.1-3 Ammianus alleges motivations for this elevation that diminish his claim to autonomous authority. This time, he does it immediately *before* the speech begins, in a prefatory chapter that outlines the decision process that brought Julian to the Caesareate. 15.8 begins with the Augustus, alone in imperial power since the execution of Gallus, extremely agitated over constant reports of barbarian depredations in Gaul.[36] Unwilling to leave Italy unguarded in order to repel the threat himself, he hits upon the idea (a *concilium rectum*, as Ammianus tellingly phrases it at 15.8.1) to admit his cousin Julian to shared imperial power. Constantius submits this idea to his consistory along with the unprecedented and uncharacteristic admission that *succumbere tot necessitatibus tamque crebris unum se* (15.8.2). Ammianus reports that this plan was immediately opposed by the palace clique (here *illi in adsentationem nimiam eruditi*, 15.8.2), who attempted to dissuade the emperor from the plan by assuaging his fears, claiming that there could be no adversity so great that he could not overcome it with the help of his excellent courage and astral fortune. Ammianus' charge of flattery is darkly augmented by the note that many of these flatterers were motivated by their own bad consciences to recommend that Constantius avoid allowing anyone to fill the office of Caesar, reminding him of what had taken place when Gallus held it.

The balance in this contest of wills was tipped by Constantius' wife Eusebia, who was alone motivated to oppose her husband's advisors for one of two reasons, according to Ammianus. He says that it was not certain whether she was simply afraid to embark on a distant campaign with her husband, or whether she was in fact upholding the common good. In any case, her proposal that "a relative ought to be advanced before all others" was that to which Constantius held *(stetit fixa sententia*; 15.8.3) when he returned to final consultations with his court. In ideological terms, the dynastic solution, problematic though it had proven in the past, is the one opted for. Interestingly, in the scene which follows, the dynastic recommendation for Julian's elevation is not stressed. Ammianus is interested in blending signs of formal legitimacy as seamlessly as he can with indications of his subjective merit. In this goal, the legally necessary support of the reigning Augustus is ultimately due to the fortune of blood relation, but the historian reduces this circumstance as much as he is able to the status of extrinsic happenstance.

The ceremonial details in the speech-scene seem designed to lock Julian unquestionably into the cosmic role chosen for him. The standard ceremonial

36 Constantius' troubles are genuine. They are acknowledged as such by Julian, *Ep. ad Ath.* 272 C, and Libanius, *Or.* 12.40. In *Or.* 18.36 Libanius adds his opinion on Constantius' lack of courage in the crisis.

introduction that begins every *adlocutio* scene in Ammianus is altered in this place to suit the occasion of Caesarian elevation.[37] Thus, in addition to mention of the high platform and the standards and eagles that surround it, the Augustus takes the right hand of the young candidate, a gesture recognizable in contemporary iconography as the *concordia imperatorum*.[38] It is a powerful, necessary, and standard icon; it presents the troops with an unmistakable visual anticipation of the request that is about to be made of them in the speech that follows.

Constantius begins by addressing his troops quietly (*placido*; 15.8.4), in benevolent and gracious terms: *adsistimus apud vos, optimi rei publicae defensores, causae communi uno paene omnium spiritu vindicandae* (15.8.5).[39] The difficulty of his military predicament in Gaul is broached immediately, and the emperor associates the soldiers with himself in outrage at the barbarians' effrontery. It is very interesting to note, both as an example of persuasive strategy and of the power of Republican tradition in an age when its basic structures had been transmogrified, that Constantius' speech frequently applies governmental and judicial terms of office to the army. The way that such language intensifies our impression of Constantius' surprisingly humble posture in his speech (surely linked to his precarious situation as outlined in the preamble) merits special attention.[40] The emperor's first words, *adsistimus apud vos*, evoke the image of a lawyer lending assistance to a client, an image that persists when he makes his proposal *tamquam apud aequos iudices*.[41] What works for Constantius as a rhetorical device, moreover, accords with a comment of Ammianus' own following the ceremony. When the speech is done and the soldiers acclaim Julian, the historian comments that *censorum voces sunt aestimatae, non militum* (15.8.16).[42] By reporting the last detail of the scene thus, Ammianus validates the appointment of his own favourite by making the entire operation seem – if only momentarily – as if it were the impartial process of time-honoured tradition, and not a relatively new type of military election. Ammianus is not

37 In many of these details, the accession scene of Gratian to junior Augustan status (27.6.1-16) is comparable.

38 See Kolb 2001, p. 146-153.

39 This is a variation on a formula found in other addresses, cf. 16.12.9.

40 Ammianus is fond of mentioning Constantius' overweening pride; cf. 14.5.4. He does indicate, however, that Constantius always dealt appropriately with the military (21.16.1-3) and that he was reasonably popular with the soldiery (17.13.25).

41 Cf. 14.10.15 *tamquam arbitros vos*; see de Jonge 1953, p. 31-2.

42 As an independent office, the censorship ceased to exist with the end of the Republic, its perquisites and functions being arrogated to the imperial person.

averse, it would seem, to showing Constantius as a leader of some worth: he is capable of effective oratory, and is popular enough with his own troops to carry a favourable point, however dubious his intentions.[43]

The qualities that Constantius chooses to stress in his introduction of the candidates is also indicative of a rhetorical strategy that has been fashioned to suit the needs of the speaker and the occasion. He commends Julian to the troops by placing his good character on a par with his blood connection to himself: *hunc fratrem meum patruelem, ut nostis, verecundia, qua nobis ita ut necessitudine carus est, recte spectatum iamque elucentis industriae iuvenem* (15.8.8).[44] Constantius clearly wants to present an uncomplicated and unambiguous portrait of his candidate to his troops here. Nevertheless, the mention of these two different points of commendation in the same breath is *ipso facto* suspicious to the reader of Ammianus' whole narrative. While high birth supported by sound education and good character would match the ideal of any fourth-century imperial panegyrist,[45] Ammianus presents the facts of Julian's life in such a way that these qualities are often set against one another. Julian had, after all, been relegated for most of his life to the east; when called to Milan he had been allowed to study in Athens precisely because he was not serving in a higher position. The dynastic argument is clearly that of Constantius, not the historian's.

It is indisputably Julian's character, in-grown and educated in the fine and upright tradition of pagan antiquity, that recommends Julian to Ammianus himself. Nowhere does the historian make his membership in the family of Constantine an affirmation of his merit to rule.[46] And indeed, Ammianus has no compunction whatsoever in

43 The resurrection of judicial and perhaps even republican terms to serve a persuasive or propagandistic purpose is not restricted to Ammianus. In *Or.* 1.9 (his first panegyric to Valentinian), Symmachus speaks of the assembled army on the point of hearing as "the Senate of the camp." (See Pabst 1989, n. *ad loc.* and p. 171-208 on the "republican" monarchy in Symmachus.) It is worth pointing out, however, that there were panegyrists who could overtly recognize the political structure of their own time and use it as a point of praise for the progress of the *res publica*; in his panegyric on Julian, for example, Mamertinus (*XII Pan. Lat.* 3.19.1-2) goes so far as to contrast the present system of imperial election and acclamation with the bad old days when high office was the product of hypocritical canvassing and time-consuming votes (See Nixon and Rogers 1994, p. 24-5 on republican figures and history in the *Panegyrici Latini*.)

44 Constantius reprises this commendation in his brief reply to the troops' acclamation at 15.8.10: *cuius praeclaram indolem bonis artibus institutam hoc ipso plene videor exposuisse, quod elegi*.

45 See Nixon and Rogers 1994, p. 9-10. Cf. Symmachus' praise of Gratian's education in *Or.* 3.7.

46 In fact, Ammianus focuses no attention at all on Julian's family connections after his elevation to the Caesareate until his reference to Constantius' part in the murder of Julian's family members in that emperor's obituary (21.16.8). See Matthews 1989, p. 84 on Ammianus' general silence on Julian's childhood in contrast with other contemporary

degrading the claims of Procopius, a relative of Julian's who used the family connection to justify his ill-fated seizure of power in Constantinople after Valentinian's accession.[47] In his deathbed speech, moreover, Ammianus has Julian refuse to name an heir for fear of exposing his own candidate to the danger of faction after his own death (25.3.20). Though the matter of family succession is not explicitly addressed here, the omission itself may plausibly be taken as a rejection of the dynastic principle.[48]

As Constantius attempts to speak further he is interrupted in what seems to be a scripted part of the ceremony: *Dicere super his conantem interpellans contio lenius prohibebat arbitrium summi numinis id esse non mentis humanae velut praescia venturi praedicamans* (15.8.9).[49] Of all the shouts that must have been bruited about by the crowd, this single coherent and well-worded thought is brought to the fore. Again Ammianus uses the voice of the crowd to validate his own belief in Julian's divine favour.[50] The comment, furthermore, is cast in the language of prophecy, allowing it to act as an anticipatory cue within the narrative, setting the tone for the rise of Julian in Gaul described in the next book. Moreover, as if to suspend the action briefly so as to emphasize the statement, the next clause describes Constantius' deportment as the shout goes up: *stansque imperator immobilis, dum silerent, residua fidentius explicavit* (15.8.9). This is a tableau image, one that accords with the salient portrait of Constantius' rigid dignity in the *adventus* at Rome (16.10), but one that also contrasts sharply with the description of Julian's appearance as his cousin delivers the exhortation to him.[51] Following his covering with the imperial cloak, Julian listens to the remainder of the speech *contractiore vultu submaestum* (15.8.4), a posture that contradicts the tone of Constantius' words.

sources, and note Matthew's speculation that the extirpation of Julian's family would probably have been mentioned in one of the lost books.

47 See 26.6 for Ammianus' whole account of Procopius' usurpation.

48 Cf. Marié 1984, p. 24 and MacCormack 1981, p. 92-6.

49 A similar interruption occurs at Valentinian's presentation of Gratian at 27.5.10.

50 Recall too the shout of the anonymous old blind woman at Julian's *adventus* at Vienne shortly after: *exclamavit hunc deorum templa reparaturum* (15.8.22).

51 See Fontaine 1982 on the phrase.

Ammianus' spotlight on Julian's reluctance here is a traditional element of accession, namely the *recusatio imperii*.[52] It seems that Ammianus is playing up the potential of this element to benefit the partisan propaganda of Julian's attitude to imperial power; one that he stresses in his account of Julian's Augustan accession in book 20, of which Julian himself also offers as an apology in his *Letter to the Athenians*. The *recusatio* places Julian among the ranks of Roman generals and statesmen from the early Republic on for whom the refusal of power was the most emphatic recommendation of their worthiness to take up the office that others wished them to. In addition to reflecting the tropic conventions of Roman *recusatio*, Julian's gesture also clearly fits into the tradition of philosophical refusal of worldly power, just as his death-bed speech falls within the genre of philosophical farewell orations (25.3.15-22). Far from pretending *recusatio*, Constantius returns to the splendour of the family to which Julian has now been admitted, so to speak, as a full-fledged member (*recepisti primaevus originis splendidum florem)*. And the elder Augustus is not content to bask in the reflected glory of the new blossom on the family tree: he takes a bold step towards outright self-glorification (*aucta gloria mea, confiteor*; 15.8.12*)*, arrogating to himself the responsibility for Julian's election, while all along Ammianus has been working to show its origin in the divine will and the consent of the army.

The peroration of Constantius' speech consists of a final admonition spoken directly to Julian himself: the young Caesar is to be present with the soldiers in the heat of battle, conducting himself uprightly and modestly as befits a good leader (the words, once again, follow a pattern familiar from the panegyrical handbooks).[53] Constantius' speech concludes with a rousing profession of the *concordia imperatorum* with which it began in the symbolic grasping of right hands, this time by a deferent nod to the will of God and of all present. It thus encapsulates all the contemporary criteria for legitimate imperial rule:

> *Aderimus nobis vicissim amoris robusta constantia, militabimus simul, una orbem pacatum – deus modo velit, quod oramus – pari moderatione pietateque recturi. Mecum ubique videberis praesens et ego tibi quodcumque acturo non deero. Ad summam i, propera sociis omnium votis velut assignatam tibi ab ipsa re publica stationem cura pervigili defensurus* (15.8.14).

Once again, the rhetorically sound, even triumphant utterances of Constantius the orator are allowed to foreshadow a less noble intention. As early as book 16, which

52 See Béranger 1953, p. 137-169 on "le refus du pouvoir" including an exhaustive list of *recusationes* in literature from the Republic to that of the fourth century.

53 Valentinian's closing admonition to Gratian occurs at 27.6.12-13.

relates Julian's first military successes in Gaul, Ammianus complains that Constantius and his court either belittled the Caesar's victories, or claimed them as the Augustus' own, publishing accounts in which Constantius was spoken of as being personally present on the Gallic battlefields (16.12.70).[54]

The elevation scene ends with a physical description of the newly acclaimed Caesar. A physiognomic note on the quality of the eyes allows Ammianus to make anticipatory comments about the future of Julian. The historian shows that his approval of Julian as an individual especially worthy of his office overrides almost all concerns having to do with the legality of his elevation and popular military support for it. Ammianus describes the tableau following Constantius' speech thus:

> *Nemo post haec finita reticuit, sed militares omnes horrendo fragore scuta genibus illidentes... immane quo quantoque gaudio praeter paucos Augusti probavere iudicium Caesaremque admiratione digna suscipiebant imperatorii muricis fulgore flagrantem. Cuius oculos cum venustate terribiles vultumque excitatius gratum diu multumque contuentes, qui futurus sit, colligebant velut scrutatis veteribus libris, quorum lectio per corporum signa pandit animarum interna. Eumque, ut potiori reverentia servaretur, nec supra modum laudabant nec infra, quam decebat, atque ideo censorum voces sunt aestimate, non militum* (15.8.15-17).

Julian's physiognomic treatment in this description serves to elevate the narrative of accession to a new level, as Ammianus moves from the elevation scene proper to the history of Julian's tenure as Caesar in Gaul in the remainder of book 15 and in book 16. Nowhere else in the *Res Gestae* is Ammianus more positive about Julian than in those chapters whose beginning is marked by the end of his accession scene. The *veteres libri* referred to in the physiognomic note herald Ammianus' own resort to ancient literature as he begins to describe Julian's activities following his assumption of the Caesarship.

Directly after the description of Julian's appearance, Ammianus reports that he was taken up and seated next to Constantius in a carriage. Aware of the irony of his newly exalted position, Julian murmured a line from the *Iliad*: ἔλλαβε πορφύρεος θάνατος καὶ μοῖρα κραταιή.[55] More than simply an *à propos* quotation from a very well-educated Greek speaker, the line divides the time of Julian's public life from his beloved days as a student, where he was able to devote himself to the Hellenic literature and philosophy

54 See also 17.1.14 and 17.11.1. Matthews 1989, p. 378-9 notes an element of disingenuousness in such complaints, however. The role of Caesar was seen to be a military extension of Augustan power in the fourth century, and the prevalent thought in other fourth-century sources is that the Augustus *is* (in real symbolic terms) present wherever his anointed deputy is. Even Libanius, *Or.* 18.66 grudgingly allows this.

55 Hom., *Il.* 11.5.83.

he so admired. However, Ammianus does not allow the Homeric quotation to seal the elevation. Just a few sections later, Ammianus begins a fresh stage in his narrative as follows: *Proinde quoniam – ut mantuanus vates praedixit excelsus – opus moveo maius maiorque mihi rerum nascitur ordo* (15.9.1).[56] The transition from studies in Athens to the Caesarship in Gaul is effected by the quotation of epic poets – Homer standing for Julian's early life of seclusion and learning in the Greek east, Virgil for Julian's life to come, which will include glorious military conquests in the west, and finally the attempt to create a "new order".[57]

Constantius' *adlocutio* at 17.13: a triumph and the "record of things gloriously done"

The third of Constantius' *adlocutiones* in the extant text, the speech at 17.13.24, would seem to pose problems for interpretation along the lines developed for reading the emperor's first and second speeches. In both of these we detected a "Constantian rhetoric" by which Ammianus contrives to trap the emperor in a particular mode of dramatic irony, an irony triggered in the first instance by his manipulation of formulaic elements within the ceremonial scene. We have just observed how the scene of Julian's Caesarian elevation diminishes Constantius' legitimate role to the most abject level of official functionality, while at the same time denigrating his subjective character. 14.10 was shown to be an ineffective rhetorical exercise because Constantius' argument was irrelevant to the audience's reception of his proposals; recognition of this discrepancy mobilized a series of intratextual references that exposed the hypocrisy of Constantius' claims to moderation and humility.

By contrast, the Constantius both of the speech-scene at 17.13.24 and indeed of the whole narrative it caps, seems unfamiliar. The last third of the narrative of book 17 (chapters 12 and 13) concerns Constantius' campaign against the Sarmatians in the Danubian provinces in 358. To the astonishment of not a few commentators, Ammianus presents this campaign as an unmitigated success.[58] The occasion of the *adlocutio* is nothing more than Constantius' victory, an opportunity for the emperor to

56 Verg., *Aen.* 7.43-44.

57 O'Brien 2006, p. 276-284 examines this allusion and its previous interpretations extensively, as well as the other Virgilianisms in this scene.

58 This aspect of the campaign narrative is discussed by Szidat 1972, Sabbah 1978, Barnes 1998, and Seager 1999.

be acclaimed "Sarmaticus" for the second time in his life before celebrating a triumph in Sirmium. Such a presentation clashes obviously with Ammianus' outright assertions of Constantius' feeble military prowess elsewhere in the text, not to mention his rather more subtle ways of undermining Constantius' persuasive rhetoric. The problem of characterization through *oratio recta* is in this case further compounded by a larger question of compositional method. Constantius' oration at 17.13.25 rehearses the exact sequence as well as the salient details of the campaign as Ammianus himself presents it in the preceding two chapters of the book (17.12-13.24): here we have Ammianus' favourite villain echoing the narrator's verdict of an effective, if not glorious action on the field.[59]

Scholars who have speculated on the anomalous Constantius of book 17 generally conclude either that the emperor is (for once) given his due for good generalship against a foreign foe, or that his success is subtly undermined, albeit in a more understated and exquisite manner than usual. I believe that a careful reading of the speech-scene makes it possible to endorse this kind of qualified criticism. Such a reading depends partially on the negative readings of the whole narrative proposed or entertained by others, and partly on applying the method of reading speech-scenes for which I am arguing in this article.

In the first instance, it really must be said that there are good reasons for being suspicious about the ingenuously positive account of Constantius in book 17. However large and discrete a unit of narrative Ammianus devotes to the Danubian campaign, and however positive the Constantius of that account appears, it is still of a piece with his larger narrative, and Ammianus is an author demonstrably adept at internal cross-referencing and structural symmetry. We seldom find him forgetful of what he himself has written. The most proximate large-scale battle narrative is that of 16.12, famously devoted to Julian's campaigning in Gaul and his decisive and glorious victory over the Alamanni in Strasbourg. Ammianus tells us that Constantius was made jealous by this victory and evinced his habitual arrogance in claiming it for himself.[60] Furthermore, Julian's successes continue in battles further east against the Franks and Alamanni as outlined in 17.1-2 and 17.8-10. Since the latter campaigns of Julian and those of Constantius were most

59 Ammianus uses a similar technique in book 20 to bolster his partisan view of Julian's accession to Augustan rank. The text of Julian's letter to Constantius reported at 20.8 substantially corresponds with his own "objective" third-person narrative earlier in the book.

60 16.12.68-69. In fact, a specious charge, as argued by Barnes 1998, p. 135.

likely simultaneously waged at roughly the same time in 358, it appears that Ammianus has made a deliberate decision to report Julian's successes in advance of Constantius'. In any case, he inserts a further account of the abuse of the Caesar's reputation at the Augustus' court in 17.11, immediately before undertaking his narrative of Constantius' Danubian successes.

Gavin Kelly has recently suggested a way to root these broad compositional parallels more firmly in Ammianus' reportage. Citing the close structural and verbal similarities between a barbarian rout in 16.12.55-7 and one at 17.13-15, he draws the conclusion that Ammianus may well be suggesting that the Augustus has learned from the noble example of his Caesar – an indirect, but nevertheless familiar assault on the autonomy of Constantius' successes.[61] In my view, Kelly's argument is convincing and compels a fresh consideration of those passages adduced, but ultimately rejected, by Joachim Szidat to support an ironic reading of Constantius' victory. [62] Chief among these is the comment, at 17.12.4, where Constantius sets out on his campaign *ductu laetiore fortunae*. Since Constantius is defined by his ill fortune in foreign wars at several points (most notably at 14.10, as we have seen), it seems very difficult to claim that *fortuna* is simply a common periphrasis rather than a knowing reference here.

Now to the speech-scene itself. Constantius' *adlocutio* at 17.13.24-34 does not deviate ostensibly from the typical formal patterns to be found in other speeches; it is also introduced and concluded in stereotypical manner. It is distinct from others in the nature of its argument, for, as mentioned above, it has no deliberative argument, instead rehearsing events already presented in the narrative.

Although unremarkable in terms of spectacular detail, the tribunal introduction (17.13.25) nevertheless includes a few distinguishing details worthy of notice. In the first place, it describes the occasion succinctly and rather straightforwardly: *militarique consensu secundo* calls attention not only to the emperor's role as a military leader in this context, but also to the power of the military in approving imperial leadership.[63] The vote of military honours here seems to be untouched by any sinister overtones, in that

61 Kelly 2008, p. 300-303.

62 Szidat 1972. The overarching argument of this account is aimed at hypothesizing source documents for Ammianus' narrative of the campaign, a goal that in my view leads to some dubious conclusions about its character. Even less persuasive in this regard are the efforts of Sabbah 1978, p. 184-189.

63 For the concept of *consensus* and the army's role in it, see Jones 1964, p. 322; Valensi 1957, p. 68; Marié 1984, p. 19.

the victory won in the name of Constantius was achieved by the soldiers themselves. The clarity of sentiment seems to be supported by the final two clauses of the tableau introduction: *his exercitum allocutus est ore omnium favorabilis ut solebat.* The details of personnel and deportment on the tribunal itself do not in this instance seem particularly remarkable.[64]

Constantius' *exordium* (17.13.26) is presented in high style, as there is little need in these happy circumstances for hard persuasion. The personification of memory at the very outset makes an apt beginning to the speech as a whole, given that its bulk is devoted to a rehearsal of the events of the campaign:

> *Hortatur recordatio rerum gloriose gestarum omni iucunditate viris fortibus gratior ea ad modum verecundiae replicare, quae divinitus delata sorte vincendi et ante proelia et in ipso correximus fervore pugnarum, Romanae rei fidissimi defensores.*

Notable also in this first sentence is the repetition of the common *captatio* whereby the bravery of the soldiers is mentioned; also the tutelary presence of the divinity in the heat of battle, which seems further to imply the emperor's personal involvement in the fighting. The second sentence of the *exordium* poses a rhetorical question again invoking memory: *quid enim tam pulchrum tamque posteritatis memoriae iusta ratione mandandum quam ut miles strenue factis, ductor prudenter consultis exsultet?* The division of deed and counsel between soldiery and emperor is familiar from Constantius' speech at 14.10.[65] Although nothing but the identity of speaker would suggest that these words are to be read with the same ironic overtones that we read the *exordium* of the former speech, it is perhaps now possible to label their style "Constantian." Compare 14.10.11-12. Similar categories of intellect and physical strength are adduced to explain the different roles of emperor and leader, though certainly in the earlier speech the syntax is more contorted, the sentiment belaboured, to the point that the speaker's embarrassment is discovered.[66]

64 We might, however, take note of the use of *ambitus* in the description of Constantius' appearance. The term is a favourite of Ammianus', and in his presentation of Julian's later speeches takes on a significance beyond its literal meaning. For this reason de Jonge 1977, *ad loc.*, somewhat misses the mark in commenting that *ambitus* is "somewhat far-fetched for *circumdatus.*" See the discussion of "*ambitiosius*" in connection with Julian's speech at 20.5.1 below.

65 14.10.12: *miles ubique licet membris vigentibus firmior se solum vitamque propriam circumspicit et defendit, imperator vero officiorum dum aequis omnibus alienae custos salutis nihil non ad sui spectare tutelam ratio.*

66 There are similar formulae comparing the rights and duties of imperial figures with those of their audiences in Julian's *adlocutio* at 21.5.2 and Valentinian's at 26.2.8. The emphasis on deed and council, however, is all Constantius'.

A typical element missing from this *exordium* is the speaker's promise to his audience that he will be brief in the oration to follow. This is not to say that Constantius is particularly prolix in his *narratio* (17.13.27-30), but he does take a very thorough approach to the exposition of the campaign in sequential detail, such that his own account of his accomplishment mirrors in miniature the account that Ammianus has just given. The peroration of the speech (17.15.31) is marked by an elevation in style, which is both true to rhetorical prescriptions and appropriate to the occasion. Constantius' description of the advantages of victory as a "fourfold prize," (*quadruplex igitur praemium)* appears to hold great promise, but the structure of the presentation, as well as a number of its commonplaces, recall strongly the conclusion of Constantius' speech under less auspicious circumstances in book 14. This is another emergent aspect of the "Constantian Style." There too, it will be remembered, Constantius chooses the serviceable though perhaps uninspired device of listing the four advantages of the occasion, allowing himself scope for elaboration on points which need further amplification. Furthermore, there is a notable contrast between Constantius' fourfold summation here (17.13.31) and the *gemina ratio* by which Ammianus sums up the campaign in the narrative at 17.13.28, suggesting Constantius' inflated, even wordy style in the oration.[67] We have suggested that the conclusion of Constantius' first speech pointed up the tendentiousness of his position towards the Alamanni. Whether there is a subtext alluding to the reward offered to the soldiers here *(vobis abunde sufficient exhostibus captivi, his enim virtutem oportet esse contentam, quae sudore quaesivit et dexteris)*, or to what he claims for himself (*nobis amplae facultates opumque sunt magni thesauri, integra omnium patrimonia nostri labores et fortitudo servarint. hoc enim boni principis menti, hoc successibus congruit prosperis)* has been called into question by an ingenious but inconclusive argument based on speculation on the potential sources of Ammianus' narrative.[68] Regardless of the "unmerited triumph" argument, it appears that here, as in the *exordium*, it is possible to identify an oratorical style that Ammianus evidently reserves for Constantius in particular.

Ammianus' description of the audience's reaction to the speech (17.13.34) contains the expected formulaic elements. Yet in this case the enthusiasm of the army's response and the specific praise lavished on the emperor in their acclamation commands extra attention: *Post hunc dicendi finem contio omnis alacrior solito aucta spe potiorum et lucri vocibus festis in laudes imperatoris assurgens deumque ex usu testata non posse*

67 It should be noted, however, that there is no contradiction between the two conclusions.

68 Sabbah 1978, p. 300-306.

Constantium vinci tentoria repetit laeta. Their heightened enthusiasm, expressed as it is with Ammianus' favoured and almost always significant comparative + *solito* construction, draws attention to the uniqueness of this occasion – it marks precisely the kind of victory that Ammianus would have us believe Constantius could never achieve.[69] Furthermore, the acclamations assert precisely what Ammianus has elsewhere asserted to the contrary: that with God as witness, Constantius could not be defeated.

With this thought, all but the most credulous of readers must stop and consider whether Ammianus, the soldier-historian who criticizes Constantius so often for his lack of success in foreign wars, could really allow such a blatant contradiction, placed in the mouths of self-interested soldiers after a bloody victory, to stand as a final fact of reportage without arousing suspicion in his own audience. On the other hand, Constantius' articulation of the same *topos* in the speech itself is allowable given the persons implicated in the claim (*i.e.* the audience of victorious soldiers and the defeated Danubian tribesmen) and the historical context: to the Sarmatians, Quadi and Limigantes, Constantius *was* in fact invincible. Nevertheless, prompted by the consideration of this final passage, and weighing the cumulative portrait of Constantius against what Ammianus presents in this oration, we have ample cause to look more closely for traces of the dramatic irony which the historian has used elsewhere to undermine the persuasiveness of the emperor's rhetoric.

Aside from the idiomatic features of rhetoric that are recognizably Constantius', Szidat identifies only one internal feature of the speech-scene that might draw negative attention – the *alacrior solito* of the audience response.[70] One more will complete the search. In the last sentence of his peroration, Constantius mentions the final advantage of the Roman victory, linking the consensus of the army with his own particular award: *postremo quoque hostilis vocabuli spolium prae me fero, secundo Sarmatici cognomentum, quod vos unum idemque sentientes mihi – ne sit arrogans dicere – merito tribuistis* (17.15.31). According to the interests of the speech, and indeed given the record of his performance, the negative apostrophe claiming no arrogance in assuming the title is appropriate. Despite Constantius' protest, however, suspicion is immediately aroused.

We have mentioned already the strain of criticism, originating in Ammianus' denunciation of Constantius following the battle of Strasbourg and appearing once again in the chapter immediately preceding the Danubian narrative, that accuses Constantius

69 On *solitus* as a term indicative of moral excess, see Seager 1986, p. 9-11; 16.

70 Sidat 1972, p. 713.

of jealously and unfairly appropriating the victory of Julian. Ammianus describes the appropriation, moreover, as *arroganter* (16.12.69), an uncomfortable coincidence of diction that seems calculated to attract comparison. Even if we could reject this coincidence as insignificant, there is another that is not so easily dismissed. Earlier in the narrative of book 17, when Sapor demanded from Constantius the cession of Roman territory to the empire of Persia, Ammianus has the Great King frame his demand – in an *oratio recta* transcript of the official letter – thus: *haec me convenit flagitare* – ne sit arrogans, *quod affirmo* – *splendore virtutumque insignium serie vetustus regibus antistantem* (17.5.5).[71] The identity of phrase here (and it appears nowhere else in Ammianus) is damning, for Ammianus almost always represents the barbarian opponent of Rome as grasping and immoderate. It seems that he is reminding us of the same vice in Constantius once again, even at the point of his glorious victory, an equation confirmed by the context in which it is presented.[72] In the chapter immediately following the speech-scene (17.14), Ammianus brings the narrative back to the Persian embassy, reporting on the properly severe diplomacy that Constantius promoted with Rome's traditional eastern enemy, which the arrogant Sapor rejects with recalcitrance.

Constantius' Speech at 21.13.9-16: "turned from fear to joy"

Constantius' speech at 21.13.9-16 marks the end of his life and is the public culmination of his long-escalating rivalry with Julian, who was unilaterally elevated to Augustan status in Paris in 360. Delivered on the field in Hierapolis (AD 361), in it the emperor openly declares hostility towards Julian (even now marching eastwards with his army) and presents his reasons for meeting his former protégé in battle. Formally and in terms of its content this *adlocutio* is a pendant to that of Julian at 21.5.1-13, in which he openly declares against his erstwhile patron. Much of what is to be gleaned about the character and rhetoric of Constantius in this speech, therefore, depends on direct comparison of these two speech-scenes, a comparison encouraged by variation in significant formal signposts. Beyond that, however, this speech completes Ammianus' portrait of Constantius against the broadest of cosmic backgrounds. Throughout book 21, both Julian and Constantius receive communication from heaven (in the forms of

71 See Seager 1997, p. 254-255 for an account of the exchange of letters between Sapor and Constantius at 17.5.

72 Sabbah 1978, p. 188 imputes the arrogance to Constantius here without noting the allusion to Sapor's letter. He claims that it is evident in the ironic switch from the first person plural of the first part of the speech to the first person singular here.

omens, auguries, and dreams) about their imperial futures, and while Julian adeptly interprets the signs vouchsafed to him to show his inevitable victory and Constantius' fated demise, the latter misinterprets his almost to the last moment of his life. The duality of objective legitimacy and subjective merit is thus allowed to split into dichotomy. Yet Ammianus suffuses the account of Constantius' eclipse with a strong infusion of the tragic *pathos* which marked the downfall of Julian's predecessor Gallus, and which the historian will employ most exquisitely as a mode of vindication for Julian's ultimate failure.

The narrative paragraphs leading up to the speech in 13.10 are packed with Ammianus' favourite terms of imperial character delineation, as well as a good number of the tropes and *leitmotifs* attached to Constantius. Thus, at the point at which the Augustus is informed of Julian's progress through the Illyrian provinces to the pass of Succi, Ammianus chooses to remind us of Constantius' favourable fortune in civil war: *maeore offusus Constantius solacio uno sustentabatur, quod intestinos semper superaverit motus* (21.13.7).

After receiving the stunning news of Julian's threatened advance towards Thrace, Constantius nevertheless chooses to send his army piecemeal, by public conveyance, to meet the Persian threat in Mesopotamia (21.13.7). This strategy is greeted with general approval (21.13.8), but the mobilization is obviated by the news that Sapor has abandoned the planned campaign and withdrawn from Mesopotamia *auspiciis dirimentibus.* Constantius is obviously pleased with the removal of one threat to his authority; it frees him to turn his attention to his internal enemy. But even more significantly, by linking Constantius' decision to turn his army towards Julian because of the auspices of an external enemy, Ammianus touches the emperor's last major decision with doom and shows clearly the subordination of the emperor's life to the cosmic forces that govern all, Roman and barbarian, in Ammianus' world.

Constantius calls together his troops at Hieropolis with an attitude of incertitude, *summa itaque coeptorum quorsum evaderet ambigens* (21.13.9), an echo of the phrases used to describe Julian's hesitation preceding his speech at 21.5 in the foregoing chapter. But his self-presentation, at least, is unambiguous:

> *cum in unum exercitus convenisset, omnes centurias et manipulos et cohortes in contionem vocavit concinentibus tubis oppletoque multitudinis campo, ut eam ad firmanda promptius adigeret imperanda, tribunali celso insistens stipatusque solito densius haec prosecutus est ad serenitatis speciem et fiduciae vultu formato* (21.13.9).

As usual, the *adlocutio* introduction includes formulaic features that seal the speech into a stereotypical mould; as often, there are individual details here that warrant particular attention.

Though the formulaic elements remain consistent in the preface (gathered army, trumpet call, position on tribunal, retinue, attitude and aspect of orator), Constantius' approach to a dubious crowd is described in quite different terms than Julian's at either 20.5 or 21.5. Ammianus' skilful manipulation of formulaic details makes the contrast of situation more telling, and the implicit condemnation of Constantius more certain. What we read as Julian's first manifestation of confidence *(ambitiosius solito*; 20.5.1) contrasts sharply with the marked suggestion of dissimulation in Constantius' strong-armed appearance (*stipatusque solito densius*) and vaguely duplicitous attitude (*ad serenitatis speciem et fiduciae vultu formato*; 21.13.9). What might be read as rhetorical savvy if the passage were taken in isolation, looks less complimentary in comparison. In his second Augustan *adlocutio*, Julian *persuades* with words loud, simple, and clear (*haec clarius solito disserebat*; 21.5.1); Constantius *intimidates* (*adigeret*). Even the emperor's elevated stance in each preface expresses the different relationship of each man to his audience. Constantius' "high tribunal" is mentioned as part of his effort to impress his audience; for Julian it is an opportunity to gaze down upon the adoring faces of his men and to intuit their benevolence even before he speaks (20.5.1), or its stone construction is assimilated to his self-confidence (*saxeo suggestu insistens...fidentior... disserebat*; 21.5.1). Constantius' *fiducia* at 21.13.9, however, is dependent upon an expression assumed for the purpose: *ad serenitatis speciem et fiduciae vultu formato*.

The text of Constantius' *adlocutio* is one of the most rhetorically rich of the speeches in the extant work, making use of imagery and diction of a perceptibly higher tone than most others. This too is ironic, given the fact that the goal proposed in it, the suppression of Julian, is never attained. This is the fundamental irony of Constantius' first speech in the extant work (at 14.10), and, we may now say fairly, of his entire life as Ammianus presents it. Ammianus is always concerned to turn Constantius' energy (most often manifested in the black passions of rage and envy) back upon him; this final speech is the ultimate literary coup on Constantius' person. Virtually every significant turning point in the oration has an ironic echo, often on the sheer level of diction, that converts the visceral power of the rhetoric to an elegant condemnation of the figure uttering the words.

The high rhetorical tone is set in the opening sentence of the speech. The emperor's first claim is cast in terms of the tried and evocative metaphor of the ship of state, himself as governor. Surprisingly, however, the focus is not upon his careful navigation through dangerous shoals, but rather on certain *errores*:

> *Sollicitus semper, ne quid re levi vel verbo committam inculpatae parum congruens honestati, utque cautus navigandi magister clavos pro fluctuum motibus erigens vel inclinans compellor nunc apud vos, amantissimi viri, confiteri meos errores, quin potius, si dici liceat verum, humanitatem, quam credidi negotiis communibus profuturam* (21.13.10).

No other speech in the extant work begins with such a metaphor; indeed, metaphorical language is rather muted in the passages of *oratio recta* in general. This is an old and almost banal one, but it stands out for its uniqueness, its attribution to Constantius, and for its interesting twist on the expected usage.[73] The shift of imagery from the good *gubernator* to the one who sails off course is surprising itself, but even more so in its self-critical posture. Self-criticism bespeaks a humility that Constantius claims, but which Ammianus never attributes to him.

Though the speech is full of dramatic ironies turning on Constantius' characterization through the history, the echoes of situation and diction from his first speech in the extant work at 14.10 stand out prominently, giving the entire performance the air of closure (if only by a fluke of textual tradition). Interspersed with these are recollected terms and tropes from Julian's recent speech at 21.5. The combined effect of all the echoes is to heighten the contrast between Constantius and his young rival. The opening metaphor has embedded within it a strain of such recollections, which are illustrative of his technique. Thus the very first word of the speech, *sollicitus*, recalls the solicitude that Julian professes to his troops at 21.5, suggesting again the parity of situation for the two men coming head to head.[74] It does not take long, however, for Ammianus to inject words evoking the disparity between truth and utterance so characteristic of the historian's portrayal of the emperor throughout the work.

73 Szidat 1996 *ad* 21.13.10 notes that the simile comparing emperor to steersman was common enough in late antiquity, citing examples in Prud., *c. Symm.* 1.37 and in the *Pan. Lat.* 7.12.7, 8.3.3 and 10.11.1. Ammianus himself uses a similar metaphor in 20.5.7, comparing the dangerous circumstances of the election of Jovian with a ship in a storm without an oarsman. The classical *loci* include Cicero (in whose works the simile occurs *passim)*, *Rab. Post.* 25; Horace, *Carm.* 1.14, with a number of Greek antecedents. See also Fontaine 1996, p. 242-3 n. 406. For use of nautical metaphors in *Pan. Lat.* 4.27.2, see Nixon and Rogers 1994, p. 372 n. 115, with an independent list of Classical *loci*.

74 *Sollicitus* is a term used to describe Julian's feelings at 20.4.6, 16.12.6 and at 21.5.7.

In Constantius' formulation, *cautus* is the term to describe his policy at the helm of state. He also invoked that attribute in 14.10.14, where he called himself *cunctator et cautus utiliumque monitor.* Now caution and hesitation, in themselves ambiguous terms, took on a negative nuance in Constantius' usage in book 14 by virtue of their context, as we have shown in our discussion of that speech. Julian uses the term of himself in 21.5.5 in what is obviously intended to be taken as a positive quality; in any case the speech rates a positive reaction from the audience. In book 14, Constantius' entire speech was undermined by the response of the audience, who approved the emperor's plan to abandon his campaign not because he was persuasive, but because they believed him to have an adverse *fortuna* in foreign wars. Thus his *veritatis enim absoluta semper ratio simplex* of 14.10.13 sounded false, just as his *inculpatae parum congruens honestati* rings ominously hollow here. The arrogance in this position negates the claim to humility in the errant ship-of-state metaphor, as does the seemingly unobtrusive *erigens.* Used here in its proper concrete sense of raising sails, it has been applied a number of times through the book to Julian's rising spirits.[75] The attempt at humility *is* undone, however, by Constantius' claim to *humanitas* near the end of the paragraph. So pregnant a moral term cannot be wielded by a figure who has received the characterisation he has, without even the most imperceptive reader feeling the contradiction.[76]

After the usual blandishments by way of asking his audience to be attentive, Constantius reveals the cause of his admission: *Gallum patruelem meum*... (21.13.11). In a moment of danger and division in the empire, he had elevated Gallus to the rank of Caesar and sent him off to the oversight of the east. But this is not the greatest mistake he has made: it is only the prelude and *exemplum* of it. After receiving reports of Gallus' "defection from justice" (*a iustitia... defecisset*), says the emperor, "he was punished by the judgement of law" (*arbitrio punitus est legum*). Constantius introduces the case of Gallus not so much to illustrate his own error in judgement, but to compare his case with that of his half-brother Julian: a Caesar of rebellious intent could be put down. Unfortunately for Constantius, his rhetorical version of Gallus' end bears little relation to the sordid

75 *Erigens* is an aspect of an extended metaphor of Julian's alternately billowing and deflating hopes in book 21. Thus *altius semet attollens, semperque ambigens* (21.1.1); *erigebat tamen aliquotiens animum ad multa et urguentia* (21.1.3); *hoc casu elatior* (21.4.7); *quae dum mentibus aguntur erectis* (21.5.1). The word is used in a negative connotation of Gallus: *velut contumaciae quoddam vexillum altius erigens,* and again by Constantius in a negative generalisation of his enemies at the end of the present speech: *ad insontium pericula surrexerunt* (21.13.14).

76 Note the mention of *inmanitas and saevitia* in the obituary (21.16.8). Cf. Fontaine 1996, p. 243 n. 406.

tale that Ammianus presents in book 14. There the fierce young man is coaxed towards the Augustus' court, then abducted, then peremptorily – and extralegally – executed.[77]

This, then, serves as Constantius' introduction to the wrong he feels at Julian's usurpation. He purports to deal with it first under the rubric of jealousy, then of justice. Both qualities are personified. Constantius' rhetorical strategy of objectifying these abstract moral terms backfires in Ammianus' overarching strategy of discrediting him: *Atque utinam hoc contenta fuisset Invidia, turbarum acerrima concitatrix, et angebat nos una, sed secura, doloris praeteriti recordati* (21.13.12). The reader's literary memory is better than Constantius'. It will be remembered that at precisely the point at which he finishes his pathetic narration of Gallus' murder, Ammianus presents a digression on Adrasteia, the imminent force of retribution known in Greek as Nemesis (14.11.4-26). As the daughter of *Iustitia* she ensures punishment for those who have done wrong, and therefore is responsible for the deaths of Gallus' chief executioners, Scudilo and Barbatio. Ammianus' resurrection of the theme here in the emperor's speech has the effect of adding Constantius' name to the list of wrongdoers who will with time be repaid for what they have done.

Constantius next derides Julian's conduct in Gaul as *levium confidentia proeliorum*, the arrogance (*confidentia*) which contrasts so obviously with Constantius' confidence (*fiducia*) in the speech introduction, and we recall that Constantius' confidence (*fiducia*) as it is described there is an only apparent one, resulting ostensibly from a facial expression. More significant to the ironic tone and literary colour of the speech, however, is Constantius' elaboration of the trope of Julian's *confidentia* in the remainder of paragraph 13 and through paragraph 14:

> *aequitate calcata, parente nutriceque orbis Romani, quam tumentes spiritus tamquam favillas... se facturamque deinde ut sceleste factorum ultricem et ipse expertus et docente antiquitate facile credo. Quid igitur superest, nisi ut turbinibus excitis occurramus subcrescentis rabiem belli, antequam pubescat validius, celeritatis remediis oppressuri ? nec enim dubiam, favore numinis summi praesente, cuius perenni suffragio damnantur ingrati, ferrum impie praeparatum ad eorum interitum esse vertendum, qui non lacessiti, sed aucti beneficiis pluribus, ad insontium pericula surrexerent* (21.13-14).

After he has described Julian's swelling pride at having defeated the "half-armed Germans" (21.13.13), Constantius invokes a second personified abstraction, justice in the form of *aequitas*. The exact same term is invoked twice in the preceding speech of

77 Gallus' execution is described at 14.11. For the illegality of the execution see Fontaine 1996, p. 443 n. 408 and den Boeft *et al.*, 1991, p. 205.

Julian (at 21.5.2 and 21.5.5) as the goal of the imperial project he presents to his army. Thus the contradiction between the two speeches is precise, and again the force of the trope is turned back upon Constantius.[78]

The final sentence of the speech brings the theme of ironic knowledge full circle, as well as leaving us with a thrilling sensory image of the imperial army as they poise for their march on Julian:

> *Ut enim mea mens augurat Iustiaque rectis consiliis adfutura promittit, spondeo quod si ventum fuerit comminus, ita pavore torpescent, ut nec oculorum vestrorum vibratae lucis ardorem nec barritus sonum perferant primum* (21.13.15).

Constantius uses the ancient verb of prophecy, *auguro*, to indicate his prescience. The line is an allusion to *Aeneid* 7.273, the sort of borrowing that is bound to give a peroration heightened resonance.[79] Yet we may notice that Constantius here arrogates to himself the power to interpret the future (*mea mens augurat*), a step that marks this tragic protagonist's final movement toward *dénouement*. The phrase is, moreover, a Virgilian tag that evokes the lame-duck King Latinus as he acknowledges the heroic authority of Aeneas, and almost immediately abdicates his own power.[80]

The conclusion of the speech-scene places Constantius' soldiery in a splendid, if not sympathetic light; the focus on their eyes bears comparison with the physiognomic note on Julian at his promotion to the Caesareate. The *vibrata lux* of their eyes is quickly shifted, however, to their shaking spears in Ammianus' description of their response to Constantius' words. Here Ammianus indicates that they wish to be led against the "rebel" (*rebellem*).[81] Finally, Constantius' mood is changed from fear into happiness (*in laetitiam imperator versus ex metu*; 21.13.16), and the assembly is released.

Ammianus opens the fourteenth chapter of book 21, however, with the final, and, as it were, definitive reversal of the emperor's joy: *in hoc rerum adversarum tumultu haerens eius fortuna iam et subsistens adventare casum vitae difficilem modo non loquentibus*

78 Fontaine 1996, p. 243-245 n. 409-417 highlights the mingling of personified divine attributes, Virgilian reminiscence, and – just possibly – a Christian reference in the language of the corrupt text of 21.13.13, which to his ear recalls the Magnificat. Indeed, Pighi 1935, p. 141-147 anticipates some of this argument by comparing the logic (and verbiage) of Constantius' malediction with the Psalms.

79 Fontaine 1996, p. 245 n. 417.

80 The phrase in fact has a pedigree in Latin tragic literature before Virgil. See O'Brien 2006, p. 290-292 for a reading of this phase within Ammianus' Virgilian programme.

81 *Rebellis* is obviously a word with strong and rather clear implications. Ammianus uses it mostly of usurpers. See Seager 1986, p. 120.

signis aperte monstrabat (21.14.1). The *fortuna* that had been the fickle guarantor of his successes in the past has now left him; the story of Constantius' success as written in the extant text is brought full circle in an uncanny ring-composition. By clearly indicating that Constantius is subject to more powerful forces that he can summon for himself, Ammianus provides an all but explicit key to the ironic reading of the emperor's speech. The account of Constantius' nocturnal visions following, *nondum penitus mersus in somnem*, strongly recall Julian's vision reported at 20.5.10, even to the extent of verbal reminiscence.[82] Just as Ammianus' representation of Julian's divine communication is altered to fit the grand conception of Julian's place in the cosmos (*i.e.* by associating the justice of his usurpation both with his own personal fortune and with the tutelary interests of the *genius publicus*)[83], so does he tailor Constantius' vision to reflect only a more personal kind of *daimon*, which, as Constantius is made to confess, is on the verge of leaving him altogether. Added to the persuasive economy of imagery in these two scenes is the fact that Julian is held to have had *praesagia* of Constantius' death already in the first chapter of book 21. Thus with 21.14 we have the final logical moment in the tragic drama that has been so prominently at the fore of the narrative of book 21, and at the same time the final word in the essential character contrast of Julian and Constantius. The obituary of Constantius in 21.15 will only enumerate the various faults and few virtues that might be compared with the content of Julian's persona. The two men never come to face each other on the battlefield. But then their conflict has already been brought to resolution on the highest plane of reality, the outcome determined by the concurrence of individual genius and that of the Roman state in Julian's case, and by their diremption in the case of Constantius.

At the outset of this article, I mentioned that Ammianus' obituary criticism of Constantius' rhetorical ineptitude is in some sense betrayed by the emperor's oratorical stature in the narrative of the years AD 354-361. While it can only be expected that Ammianus would make good on his summary criticism in the *adlocutio* scenes he attributes to Constantius, it should be clear from the foregoing that in the hands of this master historiographer, speeches offer not only a rich opportunity for individual characterization, but also for conveying a mid-fourth century ideology of imperial

82 Julian reports his dream: *iunctoribus proximus rettulerat imperator* (20.5.10); Constantius his: *confessus est iunctoribus proximis* (21.14.2).

83 Ammianus' report of Julian's vision of the *genius publicus* at 20.5.10 contrasts pointedly with Julian's own report of the "divine sign" in the *Ep. ad Ath.* 284 B-C. That both accounts serve a tendentious goal is clear; which is more accurate is not.

power. The critical portrait of Constantius that emerges from the speeches Ammianus makes for him is consistent, but complex. That Ammianus' is an idiosyncratic point of view goes without saying; so much scholarly conjecture about his work is hedged and defined by what we do not have of his writing and cannot know of the man. In the present context, the loss of his account of the usurper Vetranio's abdication in 350 is particularly lamentable, for it was secured, other contemporaries tell us, by Constantius' oratorical persuasion. Until the lost books of the *Res Gestae* appear and we can enjoy Ammianus' presentation of that uncharacteristic *adlocutio*, we shall have to live with the ghost of Vetranio, working his subtle revenge in the fecklessness of Constantius' words.

Appendix A: elements of *adlocutio* introductions

	Time	Gathering of Troops	Trumpet Call	Progression to Tribunal	Retinue	Imperial Deportment and Attitude	Introduction of Speech Text
Constantius 14.10.11		advocato in contionem excercitu		tribunali adsistens	circumdatus potestatum coetu celsorum		ad hunc disseruit modum
Constantius 15.8.4	praedicto dies	advocato omni quod erat conmilito		tribunali ad altiorem suggestum erecto Augustus insistens	quod aquilae circumdederunt et signa	eumque manu retinens dextera	haec sermone placido peroravit
Constantius 17.13.25		convocatis cohortibus et centuriis et manipulis		tribunali insistens	signisque ambitus et aquilis et agmine multiplicium potestatum	ore omnium favorabilis, ut solebat	his exercitus adlocutus est
Julian 21.5.1		classico ad contionem exercitu convocato	classico … convocato	saxeo suggestu insistens		iamque, ut apparebat, fidentior	haec clarius solito disserebat
Constantius 21.13.9		cum in unum exercitus convenisset omnes centurios et manipulos et cohortes in contionem… oppletoque multitudinis campo	vocavit concinentibus tubis	ut eam ad firmanda promptius adigeret imperanda tribunali celso insistens	stipatusque solito densius	ad serenitatis speciem et fiduciae vultu formato	haec prosecutus est

Appendix B: elements of *adlocutio* conclusions

	Audience Reaction (positive/negative)	Acclamation/Gestures/Noise	Miscellaneous Concluding Elements (return to palace, invocations, etc.)
Constantius 14.10.16	Mox dicta finierat, multitudo omnis ad quae imperator voluit promptior laudato consilio consensit in pacem		ea ratione maxime percita, quod norat expeditionibus crebris fortunatam eius in malis tantum civilibus vigilasse; cum autem bella moverentur externa, accidisse plerumque luctuosa, icto post haec foedere gentium ritu perfectuque sollemnitate imperator Mediolanum ad hiberna discessit.
Constantius 15.8.15-17	Nemo post haec finita reticuit	sed militares omnes horrendo fragore scuta genibus illidentes – quod est prosperitatis indicium plenum; nam contra, cum hastis clipei feriuntur, irae documentum est et doloris – immane quo quantoque gaudio praeter paucos Augusti probavere iudicium Caesaremque admiratione digna suscipiebat imperatorii muricis fulgore flagrantem.	cuius oculos cum venustate terribiles vultumque excitatius gratum diu multumque contuentes, qui futurus sit, colligebant velut scrutatis veteribus libris, quorum lectio per corporum signa pandit animarum interna. eumque, ut potiori reverentia servaretur, nec supra modum laudabant nec infra, quam decebat, atque ideo censorum voces sunt aestimate, non militum. susceptus denique ad consessum vehiculi receptusque in regiam
Constantius 17.13.34	Post hunc dicendi finem contio omnis alacrior solito aucta spe potiorum et lucri	vocibus festis in laudes imperatoris assurgens deumque ex usu testata non posse Constantium vinci	reductus imperator ad regiam otioque bidui recreatus Sirumium cum pompa triumphali regressus est

	Audience Reaction (positive/negative)	**Acclamation/Gestures/Noise**	**Miscellaneous Concluding Elements (return to palace, invocations, etc.)**
Julian 21.5.9-10	Hoc sermone imperatoris vice alicuius oraculi comprobato mota est incitatius contio et rerum cupida novandarum unanimanti consensu	voces horrendas immani scutorum fragore miscebat magnum elatumque ducem et… fortunatum domitorem gentium appellans et regum. iussique universi in eius nomen iurare sollemniter gladiis cervicibus suis admotis sub exsecrationibus diris verbis iuravere conceptis omnes pro eo casus, quoad vitam profuderint, si id necessitat egerit, perlaturos.	quae secuti rectores omnesque principis proximi fidem simili religione firmarunt.
Constantius 21.13.16	Omnes post haec in sententiam… suam	hastasque vibrantes irati post multa, quae benevole responderant, petebant duci se protinus in rebellem.	qua gratia in laetitiam imperator versus ex metu… post haec confessus est iunctioribus proximis, quod tamquamm desolatus secretum aliquid videre desierit.

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