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SIGLE ȘI ABREVIERI / SIGLE E ABBREVIAZIONI*

ANRW	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt. Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung</i> , II, <i>Prinzipat</i> , Berlin-New York
CSEL	<i>Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum</i> , Turnhout.
CCSL	<i>Corpus Christianorum. Series Latina</i> , Turnhout.
<i>Cod. Iust.</i>	<i>Codex Iustinianus</i> .
<i>Cod. Theod.</i>	<i>Codex Theodosianus</i> .
DELL	<i>Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue latine. Histoire des mots</i> , par Alfred Ernout et Alfred Meillet, tirage de la 4 ^e édition, Paris, 1959.
EDR	<i>Epigraphic Database Roma</i> (http://www.edr-edr.it/default/index.php).
GCS	<i>Griechische Christliche Schriftsteller</i> , Berlin.
MGH	<i>Monumenta Germaniae Historica</i> .
OLD	<i>Oxford Latin Dictionary</i> , Oxford, 1968.
PG	<i>Patrologiae cursus completus. Series Graeca</i> , Paris.
PL	<i>Patrologiae cursus completus. Series Latina</i> , Paris.
PLRE I	<i>The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire</i> , I, A. D. 260-395, by A. H. M. Jones, J. R. Martindale, J. Morris, Cambridge, 2006
PSB	<i>Părinți și scriitori bisericești</i> , București
SC	<i>Sources Chrétiennes</i> , Lyon.
SCIV (SCIVA)	<i>Studii și cercetări de istorie veche (și arheologie)</i> , București.
ThLL	<i>Thesaurus linguae Latinae</i> .

* Cu excepția celor din *L'Année Philologique* și *L'Année Épigraphique* / Escluse quelle segnalate da *L'Année Philologique* e *L'Année Épigraphique*.

MACEDONIUS OF CONSTANTINOPLE, A TRUE EUSEBIAN? CONTRIBUTION (IV) TO THE CHRISTIAN PROSOPOGRAPHY OF THE *DIOECESIS THRACIARUM**

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Keywords: *Macedonius I of Constantinople, Paul I of Constantinople, Eusebians, persecution, George of Cappadocia/Alexandria.*

Abstract: *This paper deal with the figure of Macedonius, which was the second pro-Arian head of the Church of Constantinople, from 342 to 360, but with two periods of interruption, during which the pro-Nicene Paul regained his see. Macedonius became bishop because of the support he received from the Eusebians and kept his position as long as his conduct was in line with the efforts of this politico-religious faction. This meant asserting the pro-Arian doctrine of this group, as*

* alenka.cedilnik@ff.uni-lj.si and dominic.moreau@univ-lille.fr. This article is derived from a paper given in Silistra on the 11th of September 2021, at the conference *Shifting power: Political, Urban, and Demographic Changes in Late Antique Balkan Provinces*, which was organised by Zlatomira Gerdzhikova, Ivo Topalilov and Nikolay Todorov, within the framework of the LABedia project (<https://labalkans.org/en/labedia-list/conference-2021>). It was first supposed to be published in “*Annales Balcanici*” series of the same project. It should be added that the article is the fourth of a series of papers given by the same authors, which are linked to each other, as a preliminary contribution to the volume of the *Prosopographie chrétienne du Bas-Empire*, dedicated to *Dioecesis Thraciarum, Cherronesus Taurica, Bosphorus Cimmerius* and *Zechia*, prepared within the framework of the DANUBIUS Project (<https://danubius.huma-num.fr>). This research programme on Christianisation of the Late Antique Lower Danube was financially supported from 2018 by both the I-SITE ULNE Foundation up to 2021 and the French National Research Agency (ANR-18-CE27-0008) up to 2022. It is based at the University of Lille, within the HALMA-UMR 8164 research centre, with Dominic Moreau as principal investigator. The third paper of the series was the first to be published. See Cedilnik - Moreau 2021. Dominic Moreau takes advantage of this initial note to thank the École française de Rome, where he was as visiting scholar for a period of 10 months (01/09/2022-30/06/2023), when this article was modified to be submitted to *Classica & Christiana*. Moreover, both authors want to thank Irina Achim (Institute of Archaeology “Vasile Pârvan”, Romanian Academy), for her translation of their keywords, title and abstract in Romanian.

well as strengthening and expanding the sphere of influence of the episcopal see of Constantinople. As part of his efforts to achieve both goals, he introduced persecution of pro-Nicenes and, as it seems, had a significant influence in the appointment of George of Cappadocia to the see of Alexandria.

Cuvinte-cheie: *Macedonius I de Constantinopol, Pavel I de Constantinopol, eusebieni, persecuție, Gheorghe de Cappadocia/Alexandria.*

Rezumat: *Macedonius de Constantinopol, un veritabil Eusebian? Contribuție (IV) la prosopografia creștină a Dioecesis Thraciarum.* *Lucrarea de față se ocupă de figura lui Macedonius, cel de-al doilea lider pro-arian al Bisericii de la Constantinopol, din 342 până în 360, dar cu două perioade de întrerupere, în care pro-niceanul Pavel și-a recăpătat scaunul. Macedonius a devenit episcop datorită sprijinului primit din partea eusebienilor și și-a păstrat funcția atâta timp cât conduita sa a fost în concordanță cu strădaniile acestei facțiuni politico-religioase. Aceasta însemna afirmarea doctrinei pro-ariene a acestui grup, precum și întărirea și extinderea sferei de influență a scaunului episcopal de Constantinopol. Ca parte a eforturilor sale de a atinge ambele obiective, el a inițiat persecuții împotriva pro-niceenilor și, după cum se pare, a avut o influență semnificativă în numirea lui Gheorghe de Cappadocia pe scaunul din Alexandria. [traducere: Irina Achim]*

According to the ecclesiastical historians, it was with the support of the followers of Eusebius of Nicomedia that Macedonius became the second pro-Arian head of the Church of Constantinople. When the relations between him and the Eusebians later deteriorated, Macedonius was removed as the prelate of the eastern capital. He died soon after, without leaving a good reputation not only among the Nicenes/Homoousians, but also the Arians/Homoeans, which makes it particularly complex to study his career, especially because the sources are not explicit about the exact nature of Macedonius' cooperation with the Eusebians, as well as about the conditions of its end. In order to shed light on such issues, we will follow the stage of his episcopal career, from his first attempt to become bishop to his deposition, by paying special attention to: 1- his supporters, who enabled him to achieve his goal; 2- his opponents and his attitude to them; 3- the conditions of his rejection by the Eusebians.

1. Macedonius' First Attempt to Become Bishop (337)

When Bishop Alexander of Constantinople died in the summer 337, two candidates ran for his position: the presbyter Paul and the

deacon Macedonius.¹ According to Socrates and Sozomen, Alexander himself recommended both.² If we follow the first of both historians, Paul was “competent to teach, and of eminent piety”, whereas Macedonius was “a man of venerable aspect, and external show only of sanctity”.³ Sozomen’s description of Paul is quite similar to that of Socrates, but the words used by Alexander to describe Macedonius in Sozomen’s text highlight other qualities, as he is presented as a man “conversant with public affairs, and with the councils of rulers”.⁴

It is not surprising that neither of the two ecclesiastical historians gives a truly favourable judgment of Macedonius, although they record an opinion that is supposed to recommend the deacon as the new bishop.⁵ The fact that both candidates are said to have been appointed directly by Bishop Alexander, an ardent follower of the Nicene Creed, is not easy to understand.⁶ If the information is true, it can be explained in two ways: 1- Macedonius was not yet publicly a pro-Arian; 2- both candidates were not really the result of Alexander’s personal choice (the bishop may have simply submit himself to all the tendencies then emerging in Constantinople). If the second solution is the good one, it would be quite possible that Macedonius was already defending pro-Arian positions at that time, but it’s impossible to prove. According to Socrates,⁷ the Christian community of Constantinople was already then divided into two factions, the pro-Arian and the pro-Nicene, but Sozomen⁸ says that this division did not take place until after Alexander’s death. Of course, the difference between Socrates’ and Sozomen’s writing is most probably linked to the objectives pursued by both ecclesiastical historians. Whatever, the events that fol-

¹ Socr. *h.e.* 2, 6; Soz. *h.e.* 3, 3-4.

² Socr. *h.e.* 2, 6, 2-3; Soz. *h.e.* 3, 3, 2.

³ Socr. *h.e.* 2, 6, 3, translated by A. C. Zenos.

⁴ Soz. *h.e.* 3, 3, 2, translated by C. D. Hartranft.

⁵ Franz Geppert speculates that Socrates could have obtained his data in the passage of *h.e.* 2, 6, 3 from a certain Auxanon, an aged Novatian presbyter who was one of Socrates’ important oral sources. At the time when Macedonius was Bishop of Constantinople, he most likely lived near the capital and suffered under a persecution against his community, which was conducted by the head of its Church. Cf. Geppert 1898, 59-65, 118; Urbainczyk 1997, 17-18; Van Nuffelen 2003, 226-228.

⁶ Socr. *h.e.* 2, 6, 2; Soz. *h.e.* 3, 4, 1-2.

⁷ Socr. *h.e.* 2, 6, 4-5.

⁸ Soz. *h.e.* 3, 4, 1-2.

lowed Alexander's death⁹ probably did not turn into a schism, despite their respective narrative, that agree on this specific point.¹⁰

By the time Alexander suggested that he be succeeded as bishop by one of the two candidates, Macedonius had – as it is reported by Socrates¹¹ – long been a deacon and was aged. We thus can imagine that Alexander, who was head of the Church of Byzantium and Constantinople for 23 years,¹² could have known this specific member of his clergy well. Of course, it would be possible that he misjudged the man. Perhaps he could also have really appreciated Macedonius' diplomatic skills and political engagement, which is Sozomen's opinion.¹³ These abilities would certainly have benefited the episcopal see of Constantinople. Did Alexander see in Macedonius a man who could have opposed Eusebius of Nicomedia? That the future bishop would have to face attempts of his colleague from Nicomedia to interfere in affairs of Constantinople, Alexander knew well from his own experience.¹⁴ Did he hope that the election could be carried out peacefully, despite the succession being offered to two candidates?

In any case, sources do not report any riots following the appointment of a new bishop of Constantinople after Alexander's death. Additional information provided by Athanasius could confirm the assumption. He reports that Macedonius was presbyter under Paul.¹⁵ This means that in the short period when Paul was the bishop of Constantinople after Alexander's death,¹⁶ Macedonius was "promoted" from deacon to presbyter (perhaps as a "consolation prize"). This not only means that in Paul's time he performed a more responsible function in the Church than under his predecessor, but also proves that Macedonius was fully part of Paul's ecclesiastical community. Apparently, and contrary to the writing of Socrates and Sozomen, the Church of Constantinople remained thus united after Paul's election,

⁹ Bishop Alexander probably died in the summer of 337; Hansen 1995, 96 (cf. Socr.).

¹⁰ Socr. *h.e.* 2, 6, 5-6; Soz. *h.e.* 3, 4, 1-2.

¹¹ Socr. *h.e.* 2, 6, 3.

¹² Socr. *h.e.* 2, 6, 2.

¹³ Soz. *h.e.* 3, 3.

¹⁴ Socr. *h.e.* 1, 37; Soz. *h.e.* 2, 29, 1-3.

¹⁵ Ath. *Alex. h. Ar.* 7, 1.

¹⁶ Paul probably became bishop of Constantinople in the summer of the year 337. Cf. Barnes 1993, 213.

even if Athanasius, who is asserting to have been an eyewitness,¹⁷ goes on to report that Macedonius, even before he was promoted as a presbyter, had publicly accused his opponent though he does not specify the nature of the charge.¹⁸ Sozomen, on his side, is telling us that Macedonius' supporters allegedly accused Paul of "having been addicted to effeminacy and an indifferent conduct".¹⁹ Yet, Paul was probably not deposed on this grievance, at least not only on it, but rather, according to Sozomen, on the pretext of not having been elected according to the rules, as both neighbouring bishops, Eusebius of Nicomedia and Theodore of Heraclea, were not present.²⁰

Alongside the obvious inconsistency of the accounts provided to us of Paul's first episcopate, another big question remains, *viz.* what is the timeline of the events? Before Paul's deposition, Athanasius visited the New Rome at least three times: in the winter of 331-332, in the autumn of 335 and in 337.²¹ According to his writing, Macedonius' accusation against Paul seems to have taken place during the third of these trips. To calculate the time of the year of this third trip it is not only necessary to study Athanasius' itinerary in 337, but also that of Constantius II, because: 1- the bishop of Alexandria met the emperor at Viminacium, eventually before the 9th of September, before a short stop at Constantinople; 2- but Athanasius was not anymore in it when Constantius was there in the autumn of 337. This put us in the second or third week of September 337.²²

¹⁷ Ath. Alex. *h. Ar.* 7, 1-2.

¹⁸ Athanasius seems to point out that Macedonius was in the same communion with Paul after his accusations against him. See Ath. Alex. *h. Ar.* 7, 1.

¹⁹ Soz. *h.e.* 3, 3, 3, translated by C. D. Hartranft.

²⁰ Soz. *h.e.* 3, 3, 1. The question of the election of new bishops was then regulated by the 4th canon of the Council of Nicaea. Regarding this precise case, cf. Barnes 2017, 176.

²¹ Barnes 2017, 177.

²² At the moment of Constantine's death in Nicomedia on the 22nd of May 337, Constantius was in Antioch. According to Timothy D. Barnes, Constantius arrived in Constantinople shortly after and then left for Moesia Prima and the Pannonian provinces, where he is attested from July to September, before returning to Antioch in November, via Constantinople, where he would have been as soon as September. As for Athanasius, he was still in Trier on the 17th of June (where he was in exile since 335), before meeting Constantius in Viminacium and, then, leaving for Alexandria, where he is attested on the 23rd of November. Cf. Barnes 1993, 36, 212-213 and 219; 2017, 177. The meeting of Constantine's sons, Constantine II, Constans and Constantius, in Viminacium is sometime dated to the year 338, relying on *CTh.*

As can be deduced from the sources, the real threat to Paul arose only when Constantius returned from the Pannonian provinces to Constantinople in September or October 337,²³ since the Emperor was the one to strongly oppose his election as a bishop.²⁴ We would thus expect Macedonius to take advantage of the circumstances, by taking a firm and public stand against Paul. However, the sources tell us nothing about Macedonius' or his supporters' action at that exact moment. Moreover, as Macedonius is presented in the ancient texts as a pro-Arian figure, one might expect the Arians to elevate him in the position of a bishop. This did not happen, the new bishop of Constantinople after Paul's deposition being Eusebius of Nicomedia.²⁵ Could this not be a proof that, despite the information given by the sources, Macedonius was not actually a pro-Arian candidate for the see of Constantinople?

An actual answer to this question is not possible. Since Macedonius became bishop of Constantinople after Eusebius' death, it is also possible that Macedonius' task was to pave the way for Eusebius to take over the Church of Constantinople, by casting doubt on Paul's suitability. As reported by Sozomen, Macedonius' supporters themselves were admitting that Alexander had recommended both candidates.²⁶ Based on Sozomen's writing, we can assume that not everyone believed the rumours about such a double recommendation. Could it be possible that the rumours about Alexander's statement were spread by Macedonius' supporters themselves, since, perhaps, the pro-Arian party could not count on sufficient support in Constantinople at that time? Proposing two candidates as possible successors meant opening the door to strife, and this could have perfectly been in the interest of the Arians, as they were striving to name their own head for the Church of Constantinople, while the Nicenes already had their bishop. When the apple of discord was thrown, care had to be taken that the discord

10.10.4. For example, see Demandt 2007, 105. However, it is clear that Athanasius would not have been able to meet Constantius in Viminacium in that year. Cf. Kienast-Eck-Heil 2017, 296, 298 and 300.

²³ Barnes 2017, 177.

²⁴ Soz. *h.e.* 3, 4, 2.

²⁵ Brief information about the event is given by Philost. *h.e.* 2, 10. According to the calculations here proposed, Paul was deposed for the first time in the autumn of 337. For a slightly later date, *viz.* end of 337 or beginning of 338, see Périchon-Maraval 2005, 34, n. 1 (cf. Socr.).

²⁶ Soz. *h.e.* 3, 3, 3.

should not flare up until favourable circumstances arose for a showdown with Paul. If this was, as we suppose, Macedonius' task, he certainly did it well. Under Paul, he advanced within the ecclesiastical hierarchy, until Constantius arriving to Constantinople, which meant for Paul: to be accused, deposed and exiled.

According to Athanasius, Eusebius of Nicomedia was the one to revive Macedonius' charge against Paul.²⁷ As above-mentioned, the accusations themselves were very vague, and it is interesting to note that Paul's behaviour is not clearly presented as uncanonical (against the rules of the Church).²⁸ The reproach could, however, be a moral one and the fact that pro-Nicene writers do not refer explicitly to the whole case should perhaps be interpreted as a desire not to talk too much about it. In any case, his condemnation was received, according to Socrates reports, by Arian bishops at a synod convened by Emperor Constantius upon his sojourn to Constantinople.²⁹ At the same meeting, Eusebius of Nicomedia was appointed the new bishop of Constantinople. We can very reasonably assume that it was the bishop of Nicomedia who was behind all the events that led to Paul's removal. Macedonius, who proved himself in fact to be, like it was said before, "conversant with public affairs, and with the councils of rulers",³⁰ after his task was accomplished, is not mentioned in the sources until his consecration as bishop of Constantinople a few years later.

2. Bishop of Constantinople (342-343) and First Intermediate Period (343-344)

After Paul's first deposition, Constantinople's new bishop ruled without major protests in the city. A few years later, when Eusebius of Nicomedia/Constantinople died, in late 341,³¹ events completely spiralled out of control. What could be the reason? We cannot say that Eusebius had prepared in a better way than Alexander his succession, so, again, the same candidates, Paul and Macedonius, aspired to the position of bishop of the New Rome. However, the course of events was completely different this time and it is very difficult to conceive that an

²⁷ Ath. Alex. *h. Ar.* 7, 2.

²⁸ Soz. *h.e.* 3, 3, 1.

²⁹ Socr. *h.e.* 2, 7, 2.

³⁰ Soz. *h.e.* 3, 3, 2, translated by C. D. Hartranft.

³¹ For the date, see Barnes 2017, 177.

omnipotent historical figure like Eusebius did not properly prepare his succession. Could he really foresee: *après moi le déluge!*

For sure, this new competition between Paul and Macedonius led to severe riots, in which the *magister equitum* Hermogenes even lost his life (342).³² The emperor Constantius, who was in Antioch at the time, rushed to Constantinople, punished its inhabitants by halving the city's grain supply, expelled Paul, and confirmed Macedonius as the new bishop.³³ What could be the reason that circumstances yet similar to those of 337 plunged the capital into an unprecedented uprising in 341/2? Eusebius died soon after the synod of Rome organised at the end of 340 or in the spring of 341, according to Socrates,³⁴ or the synod of Antioch of 341, according to Sozomen.³⁵ Although the sources are silent about this, we can assume that Macedonius was in Constantinople at the time Eusebius was its bishop. Little reliable is known about where Paul was staying after his deposition.³⁶ We do not know for sure, but it seems likely that the Synod of Rome of 340/1 acquitted Paul of the charges of which he was condemned – as it was the case for Athanasius of Alexandria, Marcellus of Ancyra and other deposed bishops from the East.³⁷ It is even possible that Paul, after being exiled, went to Rome.³⁸ But there is another possibility: if the accusations made against Maximinus of Trier at the Council of Serdica in 343 by the “Eastern” bishops were true, he was the first to receive the exiled prelate into communion.³⁹ That Paul could have enjoyed hospitality in

³² Socr. *h.e.* 2, 13, 4.

³³ Socr. *h.e.* 2, 12-13; Soz. *h.e.* 3, 7.

³⁴ Socr. *h.e.* 2, 12, 1. For the date of the synod, see Simonetti 1975, 146; Pietri 1976, 201; Barceló 2004, 80. Relying yet on Socrates' text, Barnes 2017, 177, assumes that Eusebius died late in 341.

³⁵ Soz. *h.e.* 3, 7, 3.

³⁶ According to Athanasius (*h. Ar.* 7, 3), he was first banished to Pontus. Cf. Barnes 1993, 213. Since the bishop of Alexandria attributes Paul's first exile to Constantine and not to Constantius, it is not certain whether his information is correct.

³⁷ Cedilnik-Moreau 2021, 451, n. 18.

³⁸ Bishop Julius of Rome does not mention Paul in his letter written after the Synod of Rome and addressed to the bishops gathered in Antioch (*Ath. Alex. apol. sec.* 33, 1). However, he is mentioned by Socrates (*h.e.* 2, 15, 2) and Sozomen (*h.e.* 3, 8, 1) among the bishops who were in Rome with Athanasius, at the time of his second exile. Simonetti 1975, 144, assumes that Paul could have stayed in the West and not in Pontus during his first exile.

³⁹ Hil. *coll. antiar.* A, IV, 1, 27, 7; Soz. *h.e.* 3, 11, 7. Cf. Périchon-Maraval 2005, 34, n. 1 (cf. Socr.).

Trier during his first exile could be proved by another accusation of the same bishops against the Maximinus. Indeed, this latter was indirectly blamed for the slaughter in Constantinople, which took place, as claimed by the “Eastern” party, precisely because – thanks to Maximinus – Paul was able to return to Constantinople in 342. The pro-Nicene faction of Constantinople then re-accepted Paul as its bishop. At about the same time, Macedonius was appointed bishop by the pro-Arian one.⁴⁰

Although we cannot date the events in question exactly, we know precisely who the supporters of Macedonius were then. Socrates and Sozomen list them by name: Theognis of Nicaea, Maris of Chalcedon, Theodore of Heraclea in Thrace, Ursacius of Singidunum, and Valens of Mursa.⁴¹ They were all Eusebius of Nicomedia’s long-time collaborators and, as both historians report, assumed after their leader’s death all his power. They do not seem, however, to have inherited his political discretion right from the beginning.

To summarise what has already been said: after Alexander’s death, rumours were circulating in the capital that Paul was not suitable for the episcopate and that Macedonius was also mentioned by Alexander as his possible successor. At that time, the pro-Arian side ordained its bishop only after the emperor’s arrival at Constantinople and with his approval. They didn’t choose Macedonius, whose reputation may have been diminished by his involvement in previous events. They choose Eusebius of Nicomedia, who is not mentioned in the sources regarding the succession problem until his consecration. The events that followed Eusebius’ death turned out quite differently. This time, both parties were equally quick to appoint their own bishop. Though the emperor was not in Constantinople this time either, neither side waited for his arrival nor for his approval. Constantius subsequently acknowledged Macedonius as Bishop of Constantinople.⁴²

⁴⁰ Socr. *h.e.* 2, 12, 2; Soz. *h.e.* 3, 7, 4.

⁴¹ Socr. *h.e.* 2, 12, 3; Soz. *h.e.* 3, 7, 4. Theognis of Nicaea, Maris of Chalcedon and Theodore of Heraclea in Thrace were not only long-time collaborators of Eusebius, but also bishops of the surrounding regions, which was in accordance with the rules set by the Council of Nicaea regarding the election of bishops. It should also be seen as the result of the power exercised by Eusebius on both banks of the Bosphorus, and which is at the origin of the future territory of the Patriarch of Constantinople.

⁴² Socrates (*h.e.* 2, 13, 6) writes that the emperor hesitated to confirm the appointment of Macedonius as bishop, but, in the end, he nevertheless gave him his permission. Sozomen’s report (*h.e.* 3, 7, 8) is different. According to him, the emperor

However, nothing could erase the fact that Macedonius' path to the position of bishop was stained with human blood.

Could it be surmised that the events got out of control because the old Eusebius was no longer holding all the threads in his hands at the very end of his episcopate, while the prospective candidates to his succession were no match compared to their predecessor? Such an explanation is plausible, even if we have to remember that Eusebius managed to take over the leadership of the Church of Constantinople without causing revolt and that he held it with such a strong iron hand that the sources have given us no information of any protest against him. In any case, his successors did not have it easy. Paul's return to Constantinople may have been supported by both the decision of the Synod of Rome and by the desire of Emperor Constans to destabilize his brother's reign through the pro-Nicene bishops. If we should consider this possible threat, Eusebius' former associates were no less responsible for the disorder, when they ignored Emperor Constantius and took action without waiting for the latter's approval and support.

The attitude of both factions in 341-343 show that taking action without the emperor's participation could have been the reason for the tragic events when Macedonius was first appointed bishop of Constantinople. After the Council of Serdica (343), Paul returned to Constantinople. At first, everything went according to the emperor's instructions, although, in reality, the situation was about to be even more critical than after Eusebius' death, as Paul was returning with even more trump cards in his hands. If in 341 his demands had been based on the Synod of Rome's decision on his innocence,⁴³ in 343 his return to Constantinople was demanded not only by Emperor Constans⁴⁴ and, pos-

returned to Antioch without ratifying or dissolving Macedonius' ordination. However, it would be difficult to imagine that the emperor would have left Constantinople without the confirmation of its new bishop. Even if Macedonius did not quite fit Constantius' wishes, in the situation after the recent suppression of the revolt, it would have been difficult to prevent new riots if the disputed bishop had not obtained the emperor's approval. We can suppose that the emperor was aware of this danger. For arguments to the contrary, see Manders 2019, 255.

⁴³ Socr. *h.e.* 2, 15, 1-4; Soz. *h.e.* 3, 8, 1-4. Both ecclesiastical historians set the episode in a false context, as they both speak of it in connection with the Paul's second exile and not with the first one, as it would be correct.

⁴⁴ Ath. Alex. *h. Ar.* 15, 2; Socr. *h.e.* 2, 20, 2-3; Soz. *h.e.* 3, 24, 3.

sibly, the “Western” bishops of Serdica,⁴⁵ but also by relying on the canons of this council which gave the bishop of Rome the right to intervene if a bishop deposed by a provincial synod appealed against this decision to him.⁴⁶

Socrates⁴⁷ and Sozomen⁴⁸ give a rather detailed account of what happened when Paul returned to Constantinople for the second time. This time, Emperor Constantius, being himself in Antioch, entrusted the task of expelling Paul to the Praetorian Prefect Flavius Philippus.⁴⁹ To avoid revolt, Philippus carried out the task hidden from the public eye. He invited the bishop to a private interview in the public Baths of Zeuxippus (located next to the imperial palace), where he acquainted him with the emperor’s order. Paul submitted patiently to Constantius’ condemnation without trial, was secretly conducted to the port, and sent into exile to Thessalonike, where his family originated.

So far, Macedonius is not mentioned in the sources. However, according to Socrates, Macedonius appeared like a *deus ex machina*, when Paul withdrew from the scene.⁵⁰ By this comparison, Socrates effectively points out that the truth was just the opposite. Macedonius was part of the thorough preparations designed by the praetorian prefect on the emperor’s orders. When Paul was removed from the city, it was necessary to show people two things on the spot: 1- who the actual bishop of Constantinople was, and 2- that this bishop of Constantinople enjoys the support of the emperor. So, Macedonius and the Flavius Philippus immediately left the palace together and set out for a church (most probably Hagia Eirene). They rode in a chariot seen by everybody and were accompanied by a military guard with drawn swords. People, frightened at the spectacle, hurried to this church. Arians and

⁴⁵ Socrates (*h.e.* 2, 20, 12) is the only one to report that the Western bishops at Serdica returned his episcopal see to Paul. Paul was not present at the Council of Serdica. This is attested by a letter written by the Eastern bishops gathered at the Council of Serdica. In this letter, they claim that at the Council of Serdica the Western bishops communicated with Paul through Bishop Asclepas of Gaza, receiving Paul’s letters from him and sending their letters to him; Hil. *coll. antiar.* A, IV, 1, 20, 3. Cf. also Cedilnik 2004, 98.

⁴⁶ Pietri 1976, 220; Brennecke 1984, 42-46; Moreau 2016, 372-373.

⁴⁷ Socr. *h.e.* 2, 16.

⁴⁸ Soz. *h.e.* 3, 9.

⁴⁹ Before July 344 Flavius Philippus was not praetorian prefect; Barnes 1993, 214. See also Jones-Martindale-Morris 1971, 696-697.

⁵⁰ Socr. *h.e.* 2, 16, 7-8.

Homoousians aspiring to be the first to reach it thus completely blocked its entrance. When the chariot with the military escort approached the building, the crowd panicked, because there was nowhere to withdraw. Panic also gripped the soldiers as they thought the people were resisting and intentionally unwilling to free up the passage. In this situation, the soldiers began to use their swords and they cut down those who blocked access to the church. Socrates writes that about 3150 persons lost their lives, the greater part under the soldiers' weapons, the rest trampled by the multitude.⁵¹ Sozomen reports vaguely that, then, Constantius' order was carried out, and Macedonius received the episcopal see of Constantinople.⁵² Socrates' narrative is more engaged: he blames Macedonius for the massacre and presents his reinstatement in the position of bishop as a reward for the crime committed.⁵³

Of course, it is difficult to assess the real guilt of Bishop Macedonius for the massacre. However, there is no hint in the sources that the bishop even tried to protect people, and if ever he made any effort they clearly did not yield success. Seen through the eyes of pro-Nicene authors, he was, of course, guilty simply because he was the bishop. In any case, this would be difficult to oppose, since Macedonius – as the figure supported by the pro-Arian party as their representative – was unacceptable to the pro-Nicene side and consequently an intrinsic pretext for conflict.

Socrates and Sozomen do not mention who exactly are the other protagonists of these events. The reason could be found in the will of the two authors to put the spotlight on Macedonius, in order to present him, the bishop of Constantinople, as the main responsible, despite the potential presence of other prelates supporting him. Yet, his position was not solid at this very moment, as shown by the presence of the army. It is not possible to deduce with absolute certainty what happened when the praetorian prefect and the bishop approached the church. But still, the information given by Socrates at the end of his presentation of Macedonius' installation is perhaps not unimportant for our

⁵¹ Despite the high number of deaths given by Socrates, the situation in the capital was not aggravated to the point where the emperor should have then been involved in resolving it. If we compare the events of 342 with those of 344, we notice two important differences. In 344 none of the imperial officers were killed and the city was not without an officially recognised bishop.

⁵² *Soz. h.e.* 3, 9, 4.

⁵³ *Socr. h.e.* 2, 16, 14-15.

understanding of the episode, as he reports that Constantius was building the Great Church, better known as Hagia Sophia, at about the same period.⁵⁴ The emperor's idea of building a larger church than Hagia Eirene could have been influenced by the consideration that the massacre might have been prevented if people had had enough room to retreat.⁵⁵

3. From the Second to the Third Restoration (344-360)

We do not have any concrete information about the activities of Macedonius at the time when, with the support of Emperor Constantius, he served as the bishop of Constantinople for the second time (344-346). Nevertheless, we can assume that it is not just a lack of information. Due to the always growing animosity between both emperors,⁵⁶ and consequently due to the uncertainty of the Macedonius' position, he most likely endeavoured not to inflame passions by his conduct and, thus, probably did not undertake anything worth writing about during this period.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Socr. *h.e.* 2, 16, 16.

⁵⁵ Socrates and Sozomen do not specify which church the praetorian prefect and the bishop went to, but it is most likely Hagia Eirene, the first cathedral and only basilica in the city centre at that moment. Hagia Sophia was already under construction, but had not yet been completed. Hagia Sophia, which later became the imperial and patriarchal church, was dedicated only on the 15th of February 360. Cf. Dagron 1984, 392-393 and 397-401. Cf. also Périchon-Maraval 2005, 64, n. 2 (cf. Socr.); Heil 2014, 98. The assumption that Hagia Sophia did not exist in Constantine's time, or at least was not yet fully built, is confirmed by the fact that Paul was, according to Socrates (*h.e.* 2, 6, 7), ordained as the bishop in Hagia Eirene.

⁵⁶ After the Council of Serdica Constans wrote to his brother Constantius, threatening him with war if he did not allow Paul and Athanasius to return to their episcopal sees. See Socr. *h.e.* 2, 22, 4; Soz. *h.e.* 3, 20, 1.

⁵⁷ Socrates, *h.e.* 2, 22, and Sozomenos, *h.e.* 3, 20, 1, provide some information on where Paul could have been during this period. As Constans, in his first and second letters to his brother Constantius, demanded the return of Athanasius and Paul, without naming other exiled bishops, we could suppose that Paul, after being expelled from Constantinople for the third time in 344, spent some time together with Athanasius. This latter was in Naissus during the Easter of 344 and then in Aquileia from the beginning of 345. After leaving Aquileia, he first visited the court of Constans in Trier during the autumn of 345, went to Rome after that, arrived in Antioch probably in the middle of 346, and finally returned to Alexandria on October 21 of the same year. Cf. Simonetti 1975, 200; Barnes 1993, 91-92; Cedilnik 2004, 141-148. On his side, Paul, who was exiled to Thessalonike most likely in the autumn of 344,

Under Constans' pressure,⁵⁸ Macedonius even had to cede the see of Constantinople to Paul who, like Athanasius, returned from the West in 346. Nothing reliable is known about Macedonius for the period when his pro-Nicene antagonist was again bishop of Constantinople. However, Paul did not stay long in Constantinople this time either. He was probably deposed by a synod already in 349, after which he was accused of collaborating with the usurper Magnentius in 350. Based on these accusations, he was exiled to Cucusus in Cappadocia and executed there.⁵⁹

With the year 350, a completely new era began for Macedonius. His fiercest opponents, Emperor Constans and Bishop Paul, were dead, and his position as head of the Church of Constantinople had never been so strong. After a period of almost a decade, during which his activity was, as it seems, rather indistinct due to the instability of his position, he was finally able to begin his true episcopate. As a result, sources on years 350-360 provide more information on him, and great part of the sources deals with his acts of violence against members of the opposing party. To fully understand this phenomenon, it is necessary to shed light on the bishop's relationship with the Eusebians in this article, by focusing on two issues: 1- What goal did he pursue in his conduct? and 2- Who were his supporters?

After Paul's banishment, Macedonius began to persecute pro-Nicene Christians and Novatians.⁶⁰ Although the persecution was worst in Constantinople, it was not limited to it, but, according to Socrates,⁶¹ covered the entire eastern part of the Empire. This information is very interesting, because it shows that Macedonius was not the only bishop to encourage persecution, as attacks were perpetrated to a much larger area than that controlled by the bishop of Constantinople. The emperor only supported this action with some decrees.⁶² Otherwise, the

soon left that city and went to Italy. See Socr. *h.e.* 2, 17, 12. Cf. also Barnes 1993, 214. Would he therefore have joined Athanasius in Aquileia, or even followed him to Trier afterwards?

⁵⁸ Socr. *h.e.* 2, 23.

⁵⁹ Barnes 1993, 214-217.

⁶⁰ Socr. *h.e.* 2, 27; 2, 38, 1-35; Soz. *h.e.* 4, 2, 3-4, 3, 1. On Macedonius' persecutions, cf. also Manders 2019, 257-261.

⁶¹ Socr. *h.e.* 2, 27, 6; 2, 38, 27.

⁶² According to Socrates (*h.e.* 2, 27, 2-3; 2, 38, 1 and 16) the then persecutions were supported by law and military force. Sozomen (*h.e.* 4, 2, 4; 4, 21, 3) is not completely of the same opinion regarding the emperor's role in persecuting pro-Nicene

persecution would have covered the entire Empire with the same intensity and not just its eastern part, after his victory over Magnentius.⁶³

The bishop of Constantinople thus followed a general trend among prelates in his part of the Empire, though at the same time he is presented as crueller in carrying out the persecutions than the others.⁶⁴ Precisely because of the outstanding role that both ecclesiastical historians ascribe to him, a certain degree of caution is, however, required. Socrates had much information about what was happening then in the capital,⁶⁵ since it was reported to him by an eyewitness: Auxanon.⁶⁶ As a presbyter in the Novatian church, the latter experienced Macedonius' persecution himself. Therefore, he was well informed, but his source was not completely impartial. The fact that Socrates got his information from a conversation with a direct witness who probably spoke emotionally about the past certainly influenced his perception of the persecution in Constantinople. This is confirmed by the other parts of his work. Thus, just after he writes about Macedonius' persecution for the first time, he outlines, in a special chapter, the no less cruel persecutions in Alexandria unleashed by Athanasius' successor George in 357.⁶⁷ On this basis, the persecutions directed by the bishop of Constantinople do not stand out for their cruelty, if we compare them with the persecutions in Egypt, which are also reported by Athanasius.⁶⁸

Christians. He even writes that Macedonius' conduct aroused resentment in the emperor. See *Soz. h.e.* 4, 2, 4; 4, 21, 3. Sometimes, however, we find his text also suggests Constantius' cooperation with the bishop. See *Soz. h.e.* 4, 20, 3; 4, 21, 1 and 3. On Constantius' role in the acts of religious violence, cf. Manders 2019, 258-261.

⁶³ When Constantius took power over the entire Empire, the West embraced the process of expelling the pro-Nicene bishops, but we do not have many reports of persecution of pro-Nicene laymen - one of exception being Martin of Tours. On this last case, cf. Pietri-Heijmans 2013, 1269.

⁶⁴ *Socr. h.e.* 2, 27, 7.

⁶⁵ Socrates writes, at the beginning of his report on the destruction of the Novatian church at Constantinople near the Pelargus, that the Arians destroyed churches in many other cities on Macedonius' initiative. See *Socr. h.e.* 2, 38. Cf. also *Socr. h.e.* 2, 12, 6; 2, 27, 5; *Soz. h.e.* 4, 2, 3-4, 3, 1; 4, 20, 3-4; 4, 21, 1-2.

⁶⁶ *Socr. h.e.* 2, 38, 11 and 15.

⁶⁷ *Socr. h.e.* 2, 28, 1-15.

⁶⁸ *Ath. Alex. fug.* 6-7; see also *Socr. h.e.* 2, 28, 1-15; 2, 45, 16-17; *Soz. h.e.* 4, 10, 9-12; 4, 17, 1; 4, 30, 1-2; *Thdt. h.e.* 2, 14, 4-11.

Perhaps, however, events in Egypt did not take place entirely without Macedonius' influence.⁶⁹ Indeed, it is possible that George of Cappadocia became bishop of Alexandria according to Macedonius' wishes. The bishops (Narcissus of Eirenopolis, Theodore of Heraclea, Eugenius of Nicaea, Patrophilus of Scythopolis and Menophantes of Ephesus) who ordained him as bishop at the synod of Antioch of 349⁷⁰ were closely connected with the bishop of Constantinople. In addition, Macedonius could have known George of Cappadocia personally before he became head of the Church of Alexandria.⁷¹

Similarities in the efforts to consolidate the pro-Arian theological views are found if we compare not only the Macedonius' and George's conduct; we can also compare the climate surrounding their episcopate to the events that accompanied the visit of the commission sent by the synod of Tyre of 335 to Mareotis in Alexandria. Its members were: Valens of Mursa, Ursacius of Singidunum, Maris of Chalcedon, Theodore of Heraclea, Diognitus/Theogni(tu)s of Nicaea and Macedonius of Mopsuestia.⁷² Their arrival in Mareotis was accompanied by violence, which is described in many details in the letter of Egyptian bishops sent to Julius of Rome and to other bishops.⁷³ Hans-Georg Opitz points out that street violence in Alexandria accompanied every external intervention in the city.⁷⁴ Same people, same *modus operandi*, the use of violence by so-called "Eusebians" to achieve their goals is well attested by Athanasius.⁷⁵ The latter even writes that Valens and Ursacius were cooperating in the persecution of those who

⁶⁹ Sozomen (*h.e.* 4, 20, 1-2) reports that Marathionius of Nicomedia and Eleusius of Cyzicus assisted Macedonius in persecuting pro-Nicene Christians, but were not as cruel as him. Both were ordained by Macedonius. See Socr. *h.e.* 2, 38, 3-4; Soz. *h.e.* 4, 20, 2. Moreover, Marathionius, a deacon of Macedonius, before he became a bishop, was very active in founding monasticism in Constantinople. See Socr. *h.e.* 2, 38, 4; Soz. *h.e.* 4, 20, 2; 4, 27, 4. Cf. also Rubenson 2007, 661.

⁷⁰ Soz. *h.e.* 4, 8, 3-4. Kopecek 1979, 103-104, dates the synod to 347 or 348, and also adds Leontius of Antioch, George of Laodicea, and Acacius of Caesarea to the names already mentioned. See also Cedilnik 2022, 93-98.

⁷¹ Before he was appointed bishop of Alexandria, George had lived in Constantinople for some time. See Ath. Alex. *h. Ar.* 75, 1; Ath. Alex. *syn.* 12, 5. Cf. Cedilnik 2022, 98-99.

⁷² Ath. Alex. *apol. sec.* 13, 2; 28, 1; 72, 4; 75, 1; 76, 2; Socr. *h.e.* 1, 31, 3; Soz. *h.e.* 2, 25, 19.

⁷³ Ath. Alex. *apol. sec.* 15.

⁷⁴ See the commentary on Ath. Alex. *apol. sec.* 15, in Opitz 1938, 98.

⁷⁵ Ath. Alex. *h. Ar.* 31, 4.

were not prepared to bow to Constantius' politico-ecclesiastical plans from the moment the emperor began persecution at the time of the synods of Arles of 353 and Milan of 355.⁷⁶

Of course, the Eusebians were not the only Christian politico-religious party to use violence to achieve their goals.⁷⁷ Because of their role in the Arian controversy, however, the ecclesiastical authors pay much attention to their actions. At the background of all these was the emperor's desire for a unified Church that would be a firm support for his authority. Eusebius of Nicomedia, his supporters and his successors managed to convince first Constantine I (from 328), then Constantius II that the solutions they advocated were the only reliable way to achieve this goal. From the moment that Eusebius became bishop of Constantinople, the main ambition of the Eusebians seems to have been the extension of the control of the imperial city to as many Churches as possible in the neighbouring provinces (first of all, Europa and Bithynia, then beyond), while theological questions served as an ideological pillar to realise this endeavour. As long as Macedonius acted in accordance with these efforts – and we saw that the appointment of the Homoean George of Cappadocia at the head of the Church of Alexandria and thus the temporary extension of Constantinople's influence over Egypt was probably his work –, he enjoyed all the support of the Eusebians. Suddenly, however, he lost it and was condemned and deposed at the synod of Constantinople of 360.⁷⁸ Socrates and Sozomen cite various reasons for his removal. The first one saw the reason both in the great slaughter of Constantinople and in his acceptance into communion of an unworthy deacon.⁷⁹ The second one, who also attributed the bishop's removal to his past acts of violence, lists, in addition: the massacre in Mantinium in Paphlagonia and the

⁷⁶ On the involvement of other members of the so-called Eusebians, cf. Cedilnik-Moreau 2021, 460-462.

⁷⁷ Of course, other pro-Arian groups as well as the pro-Nicene faction certainly resorted to violence in asserting their views. Since most of the reports are from pro-Nicene authors, we can, however, assume that this is why more space is devoted to the violent behaviour of their pro-Arian opponents, especially the Eusebians, who were by far the most powerful in the 4th century. Cf. Gwynn 2007. Cf. also Cedilnik-Moreau 2021.

⁷⁸ Philost. *h.e.* 5, 1.

⁷⁹ Socr. *h.e.* 2, 42, 3.

attempt to move Constantine's coffin from the Holy Apostles to another church.⁸⁰

However, no one cites Macedonius' decision to support Basil of Ancyra and his Homoiousian doctrine in the dispute over Aetius of Antioch's Anomoean teaching as one of the reasons for the bishop's deposition.⁸¹ Sozomen reports that Acacius of Caesarea and his followers, who defended the position that "the Son was like the Father" at the synod of Seleucia of 359, had previously affirmed, in a letter to Macedonius, that "the Son is in all respects like unto the Father, and of the same substance".⁸² Although the ecclesiastical historian gives no information about when this letter was written, we can conclude, based on the above explanation of the relationship between the Father and the Son, that it was sent to Macedonius after the council of Sirmium of 359 and before the above-mentioned synod of Seleucia. We can therefore assume that the Eusebians, at least by the time the letter was written, were trying not to get into a dispute with Macedonius. The latter's decision to support Basil and his group of Homoiousian bishops was, it seems, decisive for the termination of cooperation between him and the Eusebians, and led to his deposition just a few months later, in January 360. The Eusebians' conduct can thus be easily explained, as Macedonius' new religious orientation was not anymore in accordance with their views and projects.⁸³

4. Conclusion

With the founding of Constantinople, the importance of its Church grew, along with the power of its bishops. However, the expan-

⁸⁰ Soz. *h.e.* 4, 21, 3 and 6; 4, 24, 3; see also Socr. *h.e.* 2, 38, 29-43. Cf. also Socr. *h.e.* 1, 40; Périchon-Maraval 2005, 198, n. 2 (cf. Socr.).

⁸¹ Cf. Cedilnik 2022, 95-97, 102-104.

⁸² Soz. *h.e.* 4, 22, 8. Cf. also Heil 2014, 94-99.

⁸³ Philostogius (*h.e.* 5, 1) reports that, after the removal of Basil of Ancyra and his associates in 360, Acacius of Caesarea appointed suitable candidates as bishops of important vacant episcopal sees: Onesimus in Nicomedia, instead of Cecropius, Athanasius in Ancyra, instead of Basil, another Acacius in Tarsus, instead of Silvanus, Meletius in Antioch, instead of Eudoxius, and Pelagius in Laodicea. However, Eudoxius of Constantinople, Macedonius' successor, and Maris of Chalcedon ordained their own candidate in Cyzicus: Eunomius. See Philost. *h.e.* 5, 3. As a result of this consecration, Acacius complained to the emperor, as reported by the same ecclesiastical historian. See *h.e.* 6, 4.

sion of the boundaries and the authority of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, finally recognized by the Council of Chalcedon in 451, was the result of a lengthy process. The pro-Arian bishops, who headed the episcopal see of Constantinople in the first decades after the founding of the New Rome, played a significant role in this. Among the four pro-Arian bishops of Constantinople, Macedonius is chronologically in the second place. Although he was the bishop of Constantinople from 342 to 360, he was not in control of the see all the time. In the 340s, twice he had to draw back and leave the leadership of the Constantinopolitan Church to Paul: in 343-344 and in 346-349. With the support of the then very influential Eusebian bishops, he always managed to return. They supported him as early as 337, when, according to ancient sources, after the death of Alexander, he first endeavoured to replace him as bishop of Constantinople. At that time, the pro-Nicene candidate Paul managed to succeed Alexander. However, the task entrusted to Macedonius was, as it seems, different from that presented by the ancient authors. When Paul was deposed and exiled, the new bishop of Constantinople was Eusebius of Nicomedia, not Macedonius. Therefore, the latter's task was, as it appears, to prepare favourable conditions for Eusebius' installation as head of the Church of the New Rome. After Eusebius' death, Macedonius, then a reliable supporter of the deceased bishop, became head of the Church of Constantinople. Emperor Constantius' relying on the exile of many key bishops in the East as a pretext for threatening Constantius, the 340s were certainly not easy for Macedonius and there is little information about his activities at that time. However, we know that there were severe riots linked to the changes of the prelates in Constantinople during this period (342 and 344). With the year 350, a new era began. The main adversaries to Emperor Constantius's politico-religious policy, his brother Constantine and Bishop Paul, were dead. Until 360, Macedonius was therefore able to implement measures behind which we can see the plans and interests of the Eusebians: actively and decisively asserting the pro-Arian views of this group, while strengthening and expanding the sphere of influence of the see of Constantinople. To achieve the first goal, he introduced severe persecution of pro-Nicene Christians and Novatians. Ancient authors describe them as the worst at that time. These efforts may include the ordination of George of Cappadocia as bishop of Alexandria. The capital of Egypt was then one of the most influential episcopal sees in the Empire and its legitimate head, Athanasius, was one

of the most uncompromising defenders of the Nicene Creed. Through George's appointment, the influence of the pro-Arian bishops of Constantinople spread for a short time to Alexandria; like his Constantinopolitan counterpart, he prosecuted his opponents. As long as Macedonius acted according to the plans of the Eusebians, he enjoyed their support and remained in his position. However, when he finally decided to support Basil as bishop of Ancyra and accepted his Homoiousian doctrine, he completely lost their support and was deposed at the Synod of Constantinople in 360, leaving for posterity an ambiguous personality who was never a convinced Nicene nor a convinced Arian.

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