

David Lee Eichert

**Corippus's Route to Constantinople, the Political Function of
Panegyrics at the Court of Justin II and Sophia**

MA Thesis in Comparative History, with a specialization
in Interdisciplinary Medieval Studies.

Central European University

Budapest

May 2017

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(United States of America)

Thesis submitted to the Department of Medieval Studies,
Central European University, Budapest, in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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I, the undersigned, **David Lee Eichert**, candidate for the MA degree in Comparative History, with a specialization in Interdisciplinary Medieval Studies declare herewith that the present thesis is exclusively my own work, based on my research and only such external information as properly credited in notes and bibliography. I declare that no unidentified and illegitimate use was made of the work of others, and no part of the thesis infringes on any person's or institution's copyright. I also declare that no part of the thesis has been submitted in this form to any other institution of higher education for an academic degree.

Budapest, 18 May, 2017

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Abstract

This thesis sheds light on the political and ecclesiastical controversies surrounding the ascension of Justin II (r. 565-574) to the throne in 565, and his first consulship January 1st, 566. This power shift from Justinian to Justin II occurred from the inside of the administration among a faction of senators and powerful ecclesiastical figures in Constantinople, whose impact on society can be felt in multivalent ways among the various genres of surviving sources. In order to contribute to the discussion of this period I focus in particular on the ceremonial poem combining elements of panegyric and historical epic written by the sixth century north African poet Corippus, the *In laudem Iustini Augusti minoris* (hence *In laudem*), and I shall use this work as the central text for my reconstruction of developments both at the court in Constantinople and on the ground in North Africa. I am taking the position that the coronation of Justin II described in the poem by Corippus (or “Gorippus”) catered to the ecclesiastical and political motivations of the new imperial power locus around the person of Justin II, whose initial maneuvers were carefully choreographed during the crisis of succession following the lengthy and extremely influential reign of Justinian (r. 527-565). I also argue that Corippus’s career in Constantinople removed him from the continuing struggles of the North African bishops with the overreach of Constantinople from the time of the Fifth Ecumenical Council (553/4) and the Three Chapters Controversy (543/4); Corippus’s paraphrase of the Creed of Constantinople (*In laudem* 4.291-311), moreover, conforms to the demands of the new administration, which sought through public forms of expression such as Corippus’s own *In laudem* to appeal to and win back the approval of contentious political and ecclesiastical forces in Constantinople.

Dedication:

Ad parentem meam:
Mater consilii placidis Vigilantia <suis>
semper inest oculis (praef. 20-21).

I wish to thank Prof. István Perczel for his kind assistance and for introducing me to a vibrant and complicated history of the Church in the sixth century; I wish also to thank Prof. Floris Bernard and all the faculty of the Medieval Studies Department at CEU for the invaluable experience of learning and working with them over the past two years.

Table of contents

Introduction and Overview of the Text and the Author	1
Chapter One: The Political Controversies of the <i>In laudem</i> Books 1-3	11
Part One: Authorial Voice of Corippus	13
Part Two: Justin II and the “Senatorial Coup”	18
Chapter Two: a <i>Grammaticus Africanus</i> in the city of the Emperor	26
Part One: <i>Romanitas Africana</i> and Ecclesiastical Controversy	27
Part Two: Constantinopolitan Africans and the Generation of the 550s and 560s	31
Chapter Three: the Return to Orthodoxy of <i>In laudem</i> Book 4	39
Part One: Justin II and the Return to Orthodoxy	39
Part Two Justin II and his Western Reception	47
Concluding Chapter: The Emperor and his Tower, the Later Years of Justin II	52
Bibliography	58
Primary Sources:	58
Secondary Literature:	60

Introduction and Overview of the Text and the Author

This thesis is grounded in major trends of the study of Late Antiquity, which I define in a strict imperial sense from the legal reforms undertaken during the reign of Diocletian (r. 284-305) to the Hellenization of Roman law under Heraclius (r. 610-641). I use the poetical corpus of Corippus as a starting and ending point of reference from which to assess two current topics for the field: first, the end of a tradition of Roman imperial values (*Romanitas*) independent from the influence of Christianity via a process of “cultural fusion.” This process is reflected in the sense of the sixth century as a time of simultaneously productive literature, and developing tastes, which in imperial court contexts led to a striking confluence of church controversy with secular politics. Second, I investigate the conditions of North Africa after the Roman reconquest of the sixth century, the remnants of Vandal era influence, the literary flourishing of Latin, the highly vociferous responses of African churchmen to Constantinople at the time of the Three Chapters Controversy (543/4) and the rapid decline in source material toward the end of the sixth century, leading to North Africa as the “silent land” of the seventh and eighth centuries.¹

In the first chapter I discuss the place of the *In laudem* in the tradition of Latin panegyric as a development toward a new, more vigorously Christian ideology, of the emperor’s connection with the divine. The first three books of the work likely formed a constituent whole aimed at demonstrating first the credentials of Justin II (r. 565-574), and second his rapid activity during the early days of his rule. Analysis of this panegyric will also provide in my second chapter the relevant opportunities for addressing the audience of the

¹The seventieth Dumbarton Oaks Research Library Symposium, which aimed to add nuance to the understanding of North Africa’s dynamics in the sixth century, cf. *North Africa under Byzantium and Early Islam* (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 2015).

work among Latin-speaking bureaucrats, refugees and fortune-seekers from the western provinces and North Africa. Literary developments stemming from the time of the Vandal period continued under the Roman reconquest and resulted in a particular traditional style of literature that borrowed heavily from classical precedent, and which profoundly influenced Corippus's world view. The scope of this thesis, however, does not allow for any extensive discussion of the other lengthier work in eight books on the campaigns (546-548) of the titular general John Troglita, the *Iohannis sive de bellis Libycis* (hence *Iohannis*), although I refer repeatedly to illustrative examples where relevant. I proceed in the third chapter to discuss the fourth book of the *In laudem* and the ecclesiastical controversies of the early reign and its promulgation of a return to dyophysite Chalcedonianism, which is preserved in a paraphrase of the so-called Creed of Constantinople by Corippus. Discussions of Justin II's promulgation of orthodoxy will provide the opportunity to compare the text as it is found in the *In laudem* with the other contemporary witnesses Evagrius Scholasticus, and a possible indirect witness such as the *Carmen ad Iustinum Sophiamque Augustos* of the Frankish poet Venantius Fortunatus (o. ca. 600). Finally, the concluding section allows for a brief counter-narrative to Corippus in the form of John of Ephesus's mostly negative portrayal of Justin II.

The *In laudem* is a poem in four books (ca. 1600 lines) accompanied by two dedicatory addresses; the first is to the emperor (hence *Praefatio*), and the second dedication is to Corippus's possible sponsor in Constantinople, the Quaestor Anastasius.² Because the *Panegyricum ad Anastasium* in the MS Matritensis 10029 is headed with a full title like the prefaces to the following books, it might have functioned as the preface of another more substantial lost work.³ This feature in the MS marks off the *Panegyricum* as a separate

²The preface, which has no heading, but begins *Deus omnia regna* etc. on fol. 19r in the MS Matritensis following the *Periochae* from fols. 17v-18r, a digitized version of the MS is available from the Biblioteca Nacional de España, <http://www.bne.es> (accessed April, 2017).

³For the independence of the *Pan. Anast.* see the discussion on its placement in the lost MSS, as well as other evidence, Serge Antès, introduction to *Éloge de l'empereur Justin II* (Les Belles Lettres, 1981): ci-cii.

poetical text from the other books of the *In laudem*; in addition, the contents are not mentioned in the scribal *periochae* (i.e. the proceeding summary) before the *In laudem* proper.⁴ The first book of the *In laudem* includes prefatory addresses to leading men at court (*In laudem*, 1.15-27) and a second address to Anastasius (ibid. 1.15-16).⁵ Whether or not Corippus could have had any contact with these men is not provable either way, but the majority of scholars agree that he was commissioned to accompany other court poets during the early years of Justin II's reign (cf. the presence of court poets in the imperial palace at 4.154-178).⁶ The following three books of the poem chart Justin's ascension to the throne after the mournful death of Justinian. There are a number of elaborate ekphraseis placed at key moments in the narrative sequence as Corippus shifts from scene to scene (e.g. the funeral shroud of Justinian, 1.275-290), and Averil Cameron described the use of these "extended" ekphraseis interspersed throughout the work as a feature in Corippus strongly reminiscent of his contemporaries.⁷ The fourth book, which in this thesis I hold to be a later production of 567/8, contains a description of the ceremony of selecting Justin II as consul before the senate, his prayers in the church of Hagia Sophia, and Corippus's descriptions of the high officials at court.⁸ The poem as a whole is a combination of epic imitation and panegyric that was adapted like Paul Silentiary's *Description of Hagia Sophia* to fit a

⁴The *periochae*, however, is itself not fully extant, and includes lacunae, Serge Antès, Introduction to *Éloge de l'empereur Justin II*, xciii-iv; for a comparison with the separate dating of Paul Silentiary's iambic preface from his larger hexameter work, the *Description of Hagia Sophia*, Mary Whitby, "The Occasion of Paul the Silentiary's Ekphrasis of S. Sophia," *The Classical Quarterly* 35, no. 1 (1985): 222-3.

⁵Besides Anastasius, there is a short *logos panegyricos* on Thomas the *magister militum* of Africa, to Magnus the *comes sacrarum largitionum*, Theodorus son of Peter the Patrician; and finally to Demetrius, who is in no other sources, Averil Cameron, *In laudem Iustini Augusti minoris* (London: Athlone Press, 1976): 127-8.

⁶See, however, Barry Baldwin's objections to overemphasizing the familiarity of the panegyrist and his dedicatees, "The Career of Corippus," *The Classical Quarterly* 28, no. 2 (1978): 375.

⁷Averil Cameron, introduction to *In laudem Iustini Augusti minoris*, 7; narrative sequences of Corippus are a development of Late Antique literature that allows Corippus, especially in the narratologically complex *Iohannis* to navigate from scene to scene by introducing new minor characters ekphrastically, Péter Hajdu, "Corippus's Attempt at Writing a Continuous Narrative Again," *Latomus* 60, no. 1 (2001): 167-175 (especially, 171-75).

⁸For the dating of the fourth book, Serge Antès, introduction to *Éloge de l'empereur Justin II*, xvii-xxi.

particular time and place where it was likely performed, as Corippus remarks for some kind of compensation (*pro munere*).⁹

What is known about the author himself is based entirely on the corpus of surviving works and what can be gleaned from names given in the manuscripts. Evidence from studies on the geographical and agricultural details mentioned in his writings have reinforced Corippus's own assertions that he was a poet operating out of Africa (cf. *Pan. Anast.* 36-40).¹⁰ In one relevant passage of the *Iohannis* Corippus admits his fault for having a muse of the countryside (*confiteor, Musa est rustica namque mea, Iohannis Praef.* 28) and to "have formerly spoken (i.e. to write poetry) in the countryside" (*quondam per rura locutus*, *ibid.* 25), which many scholars have interpreted to mean that he came from the outer regions of Africa Proconsularis to the city of Carthage (still the major urban center of late Roman Africa) in search of work as a panegyrist.¹¹ Cameron in the introduction to her edition of the *In laudem* argued that the intricacies of the descriptions of court ceremony can only mean that Corippus had some interaction at court or had excellent sources from which to draw.¹² The dating of the work is another major issue. Scholars have considered based on historical events in the years following the 565 coronation that the first through third book can be reasonably separated from the fourth book, due to references to the Avar and Lombard invasions.¹³ Edward Partsch in his edition dated the poem to possibly two publications from 566 to 567, and most have argued for a date of the fourth book before the second consulship of Justin II's reign (January 1st, 568).¹⁴ The scholarly consensus, moreover, is that Corippus

⁹For the discussion on the twin developments of *epos* and *logos panegyricos* in Late Antiquity, see the article by Heinz Hoffmann, who defines a genre of "non-Christian" epic, prominent especially in North Africa, "Überlegungen zu einer Theorie der nichtchristlichen Epik der lateinischen Spätantike," *Philologus* 132 (1988): 101-159.

¹⁰For the evidence of Corippus's use of specifically African geographic topography, J.M. Lassère, "La Byzecène meridionale au milieu du VIe s. pC d'après la Johannide de Corippus," *Pallas* 31 (1984): 163-178.

¹¹R. Dodi, "Corippo poeta della 'Romanitas' Africana," *Aevum* 60, no. 1 (1986): 112.

¹²Averil Cameron, introduction to *In laudem Iustini Augusti minoris*, 5.

¹³F. Skutsch, "Corippus," in *Paulys Real-Encyclopädie* (Stuttgart: J.B. Metzlerscher Verlag, 1900): 1236.

¹⁴Averil Cameron, introduction to *In laudem Iustini Augusti minoris*, 2; Serge Antés, introduction to *Éloge de l'empereur Justin II*, xvii-xx.

operated out of Constantinople when he composed the *In laudem*, although opinions vary as to whether Corippus held office as one of the *sacri auspices* (*Pan. Anast.* 44) under the office of *quaestor et magister officiorum* Anastasius or even participated in the political events mentioned in book one of the *In laudem*.¹⁵

The manuscript source for the edition of the *In laudem* is the MS Matritensis 10029 housed in the Biblioteca Nacional de España in Madrid. MS Matritensis contains a selection of authors such as Eugenio of Toledo, Sedulius, Martin of Braga, extracts of Cato, Verecundus, Juvenalis and Venantius Fortunatus among others, and this points to a tenth century *terminus post quem*.¹⁶ The folios covering Corippus's poetry were written likely by two different hands, one correcting the other, in a Visigoth minuscule script with chapter headings and a summary of contents (*viz. periochae*) at the beginning of the text.¹⁷ The MS refers to Corippus as a *grammaticus* or "schoolmaster" at the heading of book two, leading many scholars to assert this point as a biographical detail.¹⁸ The name "Corippus" has come under recent scrutiny due to the variations contained in the MS of the misspelled "Corripus" and the more common variant of "Gorippus", which is a name attested in epigraphical sources.¹⁹ The humanist writer and diplomat Johannes Cuspinianus, in fact, in 1541 provided the full and only such attestation of the name of a certain "Flavius Cresconius Gorippus

¹⁵For support of this interpretation, J. Partsch, introduction to *Corippi Africani grammatici libri qui supersunt* (Berlin: MGH, 1879): xlvii; F Skutsch "Corippus," in *Paulys Real-Encyclopädie*, 1238; Serge Antès, *Éloge de l'empereur Justin II*, 90-1; but, Barry Baldwin, "The Career of Corippus," *The Classical Quarterly* 28, no. 2 (1978): 373; for Cameron's response (*pace* Baldwin), "the Career of Corippus Again," *The Classical Quarterly* 30, no. 2 (1980): 357.

¹⁶For the description of this MS, Vendrelli Peñaranda, "Estudio del Codice de Azagra, Biblioteca Nacional de Madrid MS 10029," *Revista de Archivos Bibliotecas y Museos* 82 (1979): 655-705; for a list of the materials contained, *ibid.* 667-71.

¹⁷For information on the marginalia, Paul Speck, "Marginalien zu dem Gedicht in laudem Iustini Augusti minoris des Corippus," *Philologus* 134 (1990): 82-92; For possible third hand along with lost Spanish and French MSS, Serge Antès, introduction to *Eloge de l'empereur Justin II*, xcvi-c.

¹⁸Baldwin cautions against adopting biographical details based on the phrase *grammaticus Africanus*, calling it a "scribal inference," Barry Baldwin, "On the Career of Corippus," *The Classical Quarterly* 28, no. 2 (1978): 372.

¹⁹Recent controversy surrounds the accuracy of the name "Corippus" (still the most widely used among modern scholars) or "Gorippus," which Peter Riedlberger argues for in *Philologischer, historischer und liturgischer Kommentar zum 8. Buch der Johannis des Goripp*, Forsten (Groningen, 2010): 35; for Riedlberger's extended discussion on this topic, "Again on the name 'Gorippus' - State of the Question - New Evidence - Rebuttal of Counterarguments - the Case of the Suda," in *Corippe Occident et Orient*, CEROR (Lyon, 2015): 243-270.

[sic]”.²⁰ Some scholars have argued that the name “Cresconius” (deriving from the verb *crescere*) was typical for the Romanized elites of North Africa, and is attested from the centuries before the Vandal invasion.²¹ How the poem reached Visigoth Spain and was copied has much to do with the interests of monasteries in early medieval Iberia with the collection of devotional reading; a number of studies have explored this topic.²² Michael Ruiz Azagra, who also worked on the texts of the poet Dracontius, published the *editio princeps* of the *In laudem the Corippi Africani grammatici de laudibus Iustini Augusti minoris heroico carmine libri IIII* in 1581.²³ From the edition of Ruiz a number of seventeenth and eighteenth century republications appeared and the poem had a moment of popularity. Many of the commentaries from the earlier period of scholarship appear in the still valuable edition by Foggini in 1777.²⁴

Before the 1820 edition by Mazzucchelli of the *Iohannis*, the little known about this other major work was contained in the *In laudem* where Corippus remarked on “the Libyan races and the battles at the city of Syrta.”²⁵ He wrote his other surviving poem the *Iohannis* in eight books (ca. 4700 to 5000 lines) while in Africa and presented it before the *procures* or the “nobles” possibly in the presence of John Troglita in Carthage.²⁶ The *Iohannis* has been the topic of intense scholarship during the last decade due to its highly problematic textual

²⁰Johannes Cuspinianus et al., *De Caesaribus* (1540): ccvi.

²¹The name “Cresconius” was formally associated with a bishop Cresconius, and imitator of the African writer Ferrandus, who composed a *Breviatio canonum ecclesiasticorum*, for this debate, Skutsch “Corippus” in *Real-Encyclopädie*, 1236; Averil Cameron, “Byzantine Africa: the literary evidence,” in *Excavations at Carthage*, ed. John Humphrey (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1982): 21.

²²For Averil Cameron’s hypothesis on a connection with Venantius Fortunatus’s *Carmen ad Iustinum Sophiamque Augustos*, “The early religious policies of Justin II,” in *The Orthodox Churches and the West*, ed. Derek Baker (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1976): 58-60; Serge Antès discussed the possibility for an earlier route to Spain under the rule of king Leovigild (r. 568-586), introduction to *Éloge de l’empereur Justin II*, lxxxvi-lxxxvii; for Zarini’s summary of these arguments, Vincent Zarini, “l’Éloge de l’Empereur,” *Camena* 11 (2012): 2.

²³Available from the digital library of the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek; for a listing of the editions of the texts, Ulrich Stache, *Flavius Cresconius Corippus in laudem Iustini Augusti Minoris: ein Kommentar*, 588-589.

²⁴P.F. Foggini, *Corporis historiae Byzantinae nova appendix opera Georgii Pisidae Theodosii Diacon et Corippi Africani grammatici complectens* (Rome, 1777).

²⁵*quid Libycas gentes quid Syrtica proelia dicam iam libris completa meis*, Zarini takes this passage as an overt reference to the *Iohannis* by Corippus, “La Recherche Sur Corippe: Bilan et Perspectives,” in *Corippe Occident et Orient* (2015): 21.

²⁶*Gaudeat in multis sic si Carthago triumphis, sit mihi rite fauor, sit rogo uester amor* (*Iohannis* praef.35-36).

tradition and its interest for historians of late Roman North Africa. It is found written in a single column on the center of the MS page in the fourteenth century paper Codex Trivultianus 686 (found on fols. 1r-68r) in the Biblioteca Trivulziana of Milan. It is the only surviving exemplar, and was mistakenly identified with the writings of the fourteenth century author Giovanni de Bonis (died 1404), who copied the text, along with excerpts of Petrarch.²⁷ The *Vorlage* of this copy does not survive, but there are two separate attestations for different MSS containing the *Iohannis*. First is an eleventh-century mention in the library of Monte Casino (i.e. Casiensis) by the Abbot Desiderius, who later became Pope Victor III (1058-87).²⁸ Second is by Johannes Cuspinianus (1473-1529), who visited the library of Matthias Corvinus and remarked on the existence of a now lost manuscript housed there (the so-called Codex Budensis); he recorded eight lines of the preface for his survey of Roman emperors, the *De Caesaribus* (1541, posthumously), which remained until the time of Mazzuccehlly's edition the only widely available attestation of the *Iohannis*.²⁹ Nineteenth-century criticism of Corippus was reignited when Mazzuccehlly made the discovery in 1814 of the verses of the lost *Iohannis* in Giovanni de Bonis's MS, and in 1820 published his edition. Bekker's 1836 edition of both the *In laudem* and *Iohannis* lacked any extensive review of the manuscript, but provided a line-by-line commentary of the text; Partsch's 1879 edition for the Monumenta Germaniae Historica remained the authoritative edition of Corippus's *opera*

²⁷ Cf. J. Partsch, introduction to *Corippi Africani grammatici* (Berlin: MGH, 1879): xlviii; Riedlberger, *Philologischer, historischer und liturgischer Kommentar zum 8. Buch der Iohannis des Corippus*, 15-18; the MS description for Codex Trivultianus 686 can be found under "Milano, Archivio storico civico e Biblioteca Trivulziana," on the Biblioteca Trivulziana webpage, and is digitized at <http://manus.iccu.sbn.it> (accessed April, 2017).

²⁸ Gustav Löwe, "Ueber eine verlorene Handschrift der Iohannis des Corippus," *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie* 34. (1879): 138-140; idem, "Handschriftliches zu Corippus (Zusatz zu S. 315 f.)," *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie* 38 (1883): 479-480.

²⁹ Cuspinianus records in the *de Caesaribus* that "Fl. Cresconius Gorippus octo libris prosequutus est quibus titulum fecit Iohannidos: quos in regia bibliotheca Budae repperi"; for the textual history of the *Iohannis*, Heinz, Hofmann, "Fl. Cresconius Corippus: Textbestand und Überlieferung," in *Corippe, Un poète latin entre deux mondes*, ed. Benjamin Goldlust (Lyon: CEROR, 2015): 88; for further reading on Cuspinianus, Serge Antès, introduction to *Eloge de l'empereur Justin II*, ii, n.1.

ominia until the most recent modern edition by Diggle and Goodyear in 1970, though it is only of the *Iohannis*.³⁰

Both poems are written in the Latin common for the period of sixth century North-African literature with notable echoes of Virgilian hexameter and an interest in digressions on myths and etiologies (e.g. the digression on the origins of the circus factions, *In laudem* 1.345-365).³¹ While the *Praefatio* to the *Iohannis* is in elegiac verse, both of the prefaces to the *In laudem* are in dactylic hexameter, which though not the customary iambic metrical scheme for Greek panegyrists and their Latin imitators (cf. Priscianus's *De laude Anastasii Imperatoris*), adds Virgilian solemnity to Corippus's topic.³² Corippus's hexameter prosody follows general trends of Latin poetry during Late Antiquity by which fewer spondaic lines occur in the second through fourth hexameter feet than is generally observable in Virgilian prosody.³³ Recent studies in the prosody of both the *Iohannis* and the *In laudem* have led some scholars such as Jean-Louis Charlet in his analysis on the use of spondaic feet in the *clausulae* of the hexameter to conclude a kind of *utrapurisme* on the part of Corippus.³⁴ Charlet did, however, detect a slight statistical difference in the percentage of hexameter lines along the schema of (DDSS) in the first four feet than in the later *In laudem*.³⁵ The *In laudem* appears based on this metrical analysis to fall in line with the more purist tendencies of late

³⁰*Flavii Cresconii Corippi Iohannidos seu de bellis Libycis libri VIII*, eds. J. Diggle and F.R.D. Goodyear (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970).

³¹e.g. the analytical work of Ernst Appel discussed the peculiarity of the stylistic elements, "Exegetisch-kritische Beiträge zu Corippus mit besonderer Berücksichtigung des vulgären Elementes seiner Sprache," (Munich: Straub, 1904).

³²Averil Cameron, *In laudem Iustini Augusti minoris*, 118; on the use of iambic trimeter by Priscian, Patricia Coyne, "Priscian's de Laude Anastasii Imperatoris," (PhD diss., McMaster University, 1988): 56; the preface to the *Iohannis*, however, is in elegiac couplets, for the history of iambic prologues, cf. Alan Cameron, "Pap.Ant. III.115 and the iambic prologue in late Greek poetry," *The Classical Quarterly* 64 (1970): 119–129.

³³Cameron comments on the "remarkably correct" adherence to the rules of hexameter compared to many contemporaries, Averil Cameron, *In laudem Iustini Augusti minoris*, 17-20; a similar purist tendency can be observed in Greek hexameter of the time following the so-called "School of Nonnos" hexameter poetry, see for instance Paul Silentiary's prosody and its characteristically *streng* *Observanz* for dactylic feet, cf. Friedländer, *Johannes von Gaza und Paulus Silentiarius* (Berlin: Leipzig, 1912): 117-119.

³⁴Jean-Louis Charlet, "L'hexamètre de Corippe dans la *Johannide* et dans le *Panegyrique de Justin II*," in *Corippe, Un poète latin entre deux mondes*, ed. Benjamin Goldlust (Lyon: CEROR, 2015): 342.

³⁵*Ibid.* 339.

antique authors like Claudian. Charlet concluded further that Corippus operated within the tradition of Latin Hexameter poetry, while simultaneously breaking with some conventions for the *In laudem*, which set this text apart from his earlier project, the *Iohannis*.

The state of Corippan Scholarship today is at a turning point: after the last fifty years of new work on the corpus and subsequent translations and commentaries of the individual books, study of individual aspects remains to be fully explored.³⁶ Late Roman North Africa was once in the purview of only specialists, but continuing reassessment of the continuity of Roman influence in the region throughout the sixth and seventh century has bolted the study of Corippus to the fore as an integral source. Recent work on the author continues to approach the unavoidable dearth of biographical information, all of which must be gleaned from the texts or by discussing the intellectual context. The continuing debates of Late Antiquity (e.g. continuity with the Roman past, the end of antiquity etc.) have contributed toward scholarship of these contexts with a new collection of studies and a few recent monographs establishing much of the ground for detailed analyses of numerous aspects of the work. On the classical heritage behind Corippus's work the still standard dissertations undertaken at the beginning of the last century established the influence of classical authors on Corippus's language and imagery.³⁷ The allusions to Virgil, Lucan, Apuleius and Claudian (i.e. the *veteres vates* in *Iohannis* 1.451-452) were explored as well as the intertextuality of Corippus with his North-African contemporaries, such as Liberatus of Carthage; further studies remain to be satisfactorily realized on setting Corippus within the context of the wider world of Late Antique Latin, Greek and possibly Syriac literature.³⁸ By

³⁶For the most recent translation, Ama Ramírez Tirado, trans. *Juánide; Panegírico de Justino II* (Madrid: Editorial Gredos, 1997).

³⁷e.g. Amann, Rudolf, "De Corippo priorum poetarum Latinorum imitatore", Dissertation (Oldenburg, ex Officina Stalling, 1885).

³⁸For an interpretation of the *veteres poetae*, cf. Hajdu, "Corippus's Attempt at Writing a Continuous Narrative Again," *Latomus* 60, no. 1 (January-March, 2001): 168; compar with his fellow North African Victor of Vita's "Flowers of the Latin Language," *Historia Persecutionis Africanae*, (Berlin: MGH, 1879): 3.6.

the time of the third quarter of the last century, scholars returned to North-African literature once condemned as “inferior,” and as Ulrich Stache in his introduction commented, the situation had significantly improved for study of Corippus.³⁹ Cameron in her introduction to the first English translation of the *In laudem* highlighted the importance that having a working translation would be for the reevaluation of Late Latin literature not only among a wider audience but also by many different sorts of scholars interested in artistic and cultural developments of the Roman Empire.⁴⁰ One of the most impressive signs of the change in reception is the organization in 2015 of a colloquium focused on the author and his works; many of the themes explored in this colloquium will turn up in my present study.⁴¹ My contribution to these already numerous and far-ranging works of excellent scholarship is to turn the attention back to the author in his historical context and to look more closely at the ecclesiastical controversies of the era, which cannot be separated from the political changes that occurred at the time of Justin II’s “senatorial coup.”⁴²

The methodology for answering the major issues mentioned above is a multidisciplinary approach, which in particular amounts to the following: analysis of the source in manuscript and in its various editions (first in 1581 and most recently in 1981); offering some philological speculation on relevant, problematic passages; narrating the historical background of the text with available parallels in Greek, Latin and Syriac source material; referring to the wide-ranging secondary literature on the poet and his work; and bringing in some of the latest trends in the study of patristics and church history for an author, who has hitherto been generally relegated to the tradition of Late Latin secular literature.

³⁹e.g. Rudolf Amann who in his dissertation begins, “Poetae inferioris etiam latinitatis lectione studioque digni mihi videntur,” Rudolf Amann, “de Corippo Priorum Poetarum Latinorum imitator,” Dissertation (Oldenburg, ex Officina Stalling, 1885): 1; for the current reevaluation of Corippus among scholars, Ulrich Stache, *Flavius Cresconius Corippus in laudem Iustini Augusti minoris: ein Kommentar*, 5.

⁴⁰Averil Cameron, introduction to *in laudem Iustini Augusti minoris*, 25.

⁴¹*Corippe, Un poète latin entre deux mondes*, ed. Benjamin Goldlust (Lyon: CEROR, 2015).

⁴²For what Cameron termed a “well arranged senatorial coup,” Averil Cameron, “The early religious policies of Justin II,” in *The Orthodox Churches and the West*, ed. Derek Baker (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1976): 51.

Chapter One: The Political Controversies of the *In laudem* Books 1-3

The deliberate choices (in terms of words, phrases, *topoi* etc.) that Corippus made to appeal to a Latin-speaking Constantinopolitan audience demonstrate the propagandistic aims of the new administration; as such, I discuss the new imperial ideology of the regime as it is attested in the *In laudem*. The first three books are the particular focus of this chapter because they were performed very likely during the same or following year of Justin II's coronation (565/66). These books, therefore, can provide valuable insights into the demands of the senatorial faction in support of Justin II and Sophia at the beginning of the transition period. Panegyrics like other highly rhetorical genres in antiquity require significant discussions of the historical context in order to counter-balance the narrative of praise, but a close reading of Corippus's text in its historical context reveals a regime in the moment of seizing control over society.

It was common practice to perform panegyrics in recent commemoration of events; for example, Paul Silentiary in 563 was commissioned to perform the *Description of Hagia Sophia and the Ambo* before imperial and ecclesiastical audiences, and scholars have considered this poem a deliberate move on the part of Justinian to assert unity between himself and the patriarch Eutychius during the troubled later years of his lengthy reign.⁴³ Latin panegyrics especially were esteemed as the bureaucrat and scholar John Lydus testifies the following account:

“In order, however, that I might perchance become indolent, the prefect pointed out to me every avenue of profit, so that during the entire period of his magistracy (it was short and extended slightly beyond a year) I temperately made gain of no less than one thousand gold coins. As was natural, then, since I was thankful (how, indeed, could I not have been?), I composed a brief panegyric in his honor. Because he had

⁴³Peter Bell, *Three Political Voices from the Age of Justinian* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press 2009): 109, n. 9.

been pleased with it, he issued orders for me to receive from the bank a gold coin for each line (de Mag. 3.27).”⁴⁴

While it is doubtful that Lydus in other circumstances normally made a gold coin for every line of his poetry, he like Corippus did not veil the fact that he enjoyed certain benefices for his poetry and performed *pro munere*. While often overlooked and scorned by critics of ancient literature, one of the best comparisons that helps reevaluate panegyrics as literature worthy of study is modern news media, because of the close contemporality of the information contained with the events described. Corippus’s panegyric was extremely topical as well.⁴⁵ Like Lydus he also addressed his panegyrics to influential men at court, in this case the ardently orthodox *quaestor et magister officiorum* Anastasius. Records from other sources show that Anastasius held both these offices simultaneously only for the year 565/6, when he was replaced by Theodorus the son of Peter the Patrician.⁴⁶ Anastasius’s removal from office of *magister officiorum* is apparent in book four of the *In laudem*, where he is no longer mentioned, although he is still mentioned among the court patrons in book one, though not as *magister*.⁴⁷ *In laudem* at praef.12 provides another important *terminus ante quem*, which is the Gepid invasion crushed by the Lombards and Avars in 567 (*Langobardorum populos Gipedumque*).⁴⁸ Based on these two important termini the first three books, therefore, are generally said to have been published after the removal of Anastasius, but before the commemoration of Justin II’s consulship, which occurred some time between the

⁴⁴John Lydus, *On Powers or the Magistracies of the Roman State*, trans. Anastasius Bandy (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1983): 175.

⁴⁵Patricia Coyne in her dissertation on Priscianus Grammaticus’s *De laude Anastasii* compared late antique panegyric with today’s “television or radio programming” of the governing elite, Patricia Coyne, “Priscian’s *De laude Anastasii*,” (PhD dissertation, McMaster University, 1988): 3.

⁴⁶Peter was one of the most active bureaucrats under Justinian, and a contributing source to the later *Book of Ceremonies*; for more information on Peter, cf. Stein, *Studien zur Geschichte des byzantinischen Reiches vornehmlich unter Kaisern Justinus II und Tiberius* (Stuttgart: J.B. Metzlersche Verlagbuchhandlung, 1919): 28.

⁴⁷Averil Cameron, *In laudem Iustini Augusti minoris*, 123.

⁴⁸Serge Antès, introduction to *Éloge de l'empereur Justin II Corippe*, xviii-xix.

beginning of 566 and up until 568.⁴⁹ If the first three books were performed separately, this portion of the work reflects one of the most direct witnesses to the influence of the new administration on constructing a viable system of panegyric, which would overcome the political and ecclesiastical problems that beset the empire at the end of Justinian's reign.⁵⁰ The end of the third book is particularly valuable in favor of this argument given how dissimilar it is to the concluding lines of the first or second book; here Corippus writes as though completing the poem, "The rest of the things which the prudent emperor arranged with his lofty profound counsels, no one, I confess, is fit to recount in any amount of words, yet the course of my filled-up little book is at its end."⁵¹

Part One: Authorial Voice of Corippus

What was at stake for Corippus writing and performing the *In laudem*? Part of answering this question also involves identifying the motifs of imperial ideology that Corippus chose to engage with in appealing to his patrons in Constantinople. Many have gone so far as to define panegyric within political and cultural spheres as a method of propaganda, as Johannes Koder in a recent article argued for the case of the Byzantine hymn-writer Romanos the Melode, whose *kontakia* matched Paul Silentiary's court poetry as a kind of popular propaganda (i.e. simpler language, syntax and narrative themes).⁵² Corippus's Latin panegyric, however, would have been available only to a more selective crowd at court;

⁴⁹For the dating of the *In laudem* in conjunction with a poem from the Greek Anthology, where evidence for the construction of the Sophiae Palace also establishes a relevant dating scheme, Averil Cameron and Alan Cameron, "Anth. Plan. 72: a Propaganda Poem from the Reign of Justin II," *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies University of London*, no. 13 (1966): 101-104; for the dates of the Sophiae Palace, Averil Cameron, "Notes on the Sophiae, the Sophianae and the Harbour of Sophia," *Byzantion* 37 (1967): 11-20.

⁵⁰*cetera consiliis quae princeps providus altis disposuit verbis fateor comprehendere nullus sufficit et pleni tenor est in fine libelli* (3.402-5); Corippus adds further that he will not leave the things he has missed out *haec dilata parum non praetereunda relinquo*, but he promises to tell them at the right time; These final lines are critical for assessment of the separate dating of the first three books, Ulrich Stache, *Flavius Cresconius Corippus in laudem Iustini Augusti minoris: ein Kommentar*, 472-3.

⁵¹Serge Antès, introduction to *Éloge de l'empereur Justin II*, xix-xx.

⁵²Johannes Koder, "Imperial Propaganda in the Kontakia of Romanos the Melode," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 62 (2008): 275-91; Serge Antès describes the use of propaganda in the *In laudem*, introduction to *Éloge de l'empereur Justin II*, xxxv-xxxix.

and if the *In laudem* can be called propaganda inasmuch as it served the function of reinforcing what one party held to be the correct view, then in the case of Corippus, the audience of these first three books must have been those who initially supported Justin II's right of succession immediately following his ascension to the throne. There is an incentive to search for veiled *Kaiserkritik* in Corippus's *In Laudem*, but the interaction between panegyrist and dedicatee is in my analysis of the source enough to describe in further detail the ways a court official responded to the subject matter he was commissioned to praise.⁵³ A comparison that many scholars have made is with Alan Cameron's famous "Wandering Poets," who in Egypt typically of the fourth and fifth centuries catered to the political and social function of panegyrics within a system of urban patronage (cf. the rhetors active at court in Constantinople *In laudem* 4.154).⁵⁴ The poet Dioscorus of Aphrodito, a sixth-century Egyptian poet and lawyer, whose archive of Greek and Coptic papyri were discovered at the turn of the nineteenth century, worked as a bureaucrat and local panegyrist similar to the kind of career scholars have proposed for Corippus in North Africa.⁵⁵ One caveat to this paradigm of career poets is to separate the work from the poet himself and argue that Corippus did not really accept the full implications of his poetry. A further difficulty presented by Averil Cameron is that an accurate understanding of the patronage system for poetry after the Roman reconquest of Africa Proconsularis is lacking, in a region where most of the surviving source material is ecclesiastical.⁵⁶

⁵³Compare with the case of Dracontius, Alexander Merrills, "The Perils of Panegyric: the Lost Poem of Dracontius and its Consequences," in *Vandals, Romans, Berbers: New Perspectives on Late Antique North Africa*, ed. A.H. Merrills, 145-162. London: Ashgate, 2004; Averil Cameron, "Early Byzantine *Kaiserkritik* Two Case Histories," *BMGS* 3 (1977): 1-17.

⁵⁴Alan Cameron, "Wandering Poets: A Literary Movement in Byzantine Egypt," *Historia* 14, (1965): 470-509.

⁵⁵Dioscorus like Corippus was once relegated to the "inferior" literature (cf. my introduction, n. 38), MacCoull's treatment in her monograph on his Greek epigrams, she followed a policy of assessing the ancient world on its own terms and appreciating the multiple genera of Christian cultures, cf. Leslie MacCoull, *Dioscorus of Aphrodito* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988): xvi.

⁵⁶Averil Cameron, "The Career of Corippus Again," *The Classical Quarterly* (1980): 535.

What makes Corippus's panegyric program in the *In laudem* distinct from previous examples is a deliberate attempt to legitimize the new emperor through direct reference to God's approval of the new regime.⁵⁷ While the appeal to the emperor's divinely sanctioned right to rule is not at all a new *topos* employed by Corippus (cf. Priscianus Grammaticus's *de laude Anastasii* 162-3 and the approval of God), the degree to which he emphasizes the Christian aspects of his panegyric is a departure from the tradition.⁵⁸ Priscianus in his hexameter panegyric on the ascension to the imperial throne of Anastasius (r. 491-518) retained at this earlier date the piety of the emperor in opposition to "[the poet] who attributes heavenly things to mortals," but Corippus at numerous occasions in the first three books of the *In laudem* describes the close kinship of Justin with the divinity, even referring repeatedly to his luminescence akin to the sun.⁵⁹ Panegyrics by the end of the sixth century shifted away from what might be labeled as elements of *Fürstenspiegel* (e.g. the Deacon Agapetus's *Seventy-Two Chapters to Justinian*), and the extent of flattery goes so far in Corippus's account as to daringly address the divine approval of Justin II by replacing the muse of his poetry with none other than the Theotokos herself, "and you Mother of God extend your holy right hand for me and grant your aid."⁶⁰ The mother of the emperor, Vigilantia, and his consort, Sophia, are further connected with the divine, and the meaning of their names does not escape Corippus's poetic license.⁶¹ Corippus proceeds to illustrate how close the new

⁵⁷Averil Cameron noted that the main theme of the poem is to demonstrate that the legitimacy of Justin II's coronation as portrayed by Corippus is his divine approval, introduction to *In laudem Iustini Augusti minoris*, 8.

⁵⁸Ibid. 129.

⁵⁹"Another clear light causes the vibrant light to grow brighter," *clara corusantem lux auferat altera lucem* 4.99.

⁶⁰*tuque dei genetrix sanctam mihi porrige dextram et fer*; on the development of Panegyric and *Fürstenspiegel*, Cf. L.K. Born, "The Perfect Prince according to the Latin Panegyrists," *AJP* 55 (1934): 32-34.

⁶¹Corippus follows a common *topos* of the time by using the meaning of names, such as *Vigilantia*; he uses the name of Sophia or *Sapientia* also in this way (*In laudem* 1.8); for the mother of Justin II, *Vigilantia*, cf. Procopius *Vandal Wars* II, 24.3, Ulrich Stache, *Flavius Cresconius Corippus in laudem Augusti Minoris: ein Kommentar*, 68-9; for the name of the empress Corippus alternates between "sophia" (sometimes spelled as "sofia" in MS Matritensis 10029) ten times and "sapientia" six times, Stache, in *ibid.* 71-73; the *topos* of using names in double entendre is pervasive in the *In laudem* (e.g. the name of "Magnus" in I.22); the practice is widespread for the names of emperors (e.g. the Bishop Pontianus pleads with the emperor Justinian to live up to the sense of "Justice" in his name, PL LXVII, p. 995); for the play on names of panegyric dedicatee see also the example of Flavius Merobaudes's *Carmen* I.11 on the nickname of emperor Valentinian III "Placidus," *CSHB* LVII (Bonn, 1836): 3.

emperor was to the Virgin, claiming that she appeared before him and “stood before his divine feet and with her right hand placed the crown on him and surrounded his head with the sacred diadem,” and then dressed him in the imperial robes.⁶² This crowning by a representative of God (“the image of sacred piety” as Corippus refers to her, *In laudem* 1.36) had not developed to the level of iconographic detail of later Byzantine panegyric, but as Cameron points out, it is a development from earlier imagery of divine ascent.⁶³ Fusion at court with Christianity drove imperial rhetoric to indulge the emperor’s personal piety. Mary Whitby noted in an article on Paul Silentiary’s *Description* that Corippus’s use of the Virgin is a departure from the classicizing elements of the prior regime, where in Paul’s poem it was rather Roma the female goddess who crowned Justinian.⁶⁴ Corippus draws the metaphor of divinity even further in the *In laudem*; Justin in his coronation speech (2.177-274) claims divine approval for his right to be head of the empire. Corippus as the reporter of the divinely ordered events that led to the ascension of Justin proclaims that he operates with the divine approval (*numen*) of God (2.29); even the voice of the Trinity proclaims Justin’s reign (*In laudem* 2.41-45), “the pious words of the man’s prayer pleased the Father, the Son nodded in approval as he prayed, the Holy Spirit said ‘may he reign,’” and in response to his generosity the poet proclaims Justin as the most Christian emperor, “It is God who does this; God is in the heart of the rulers (ibid. 2.425).”⁶⁵ Finally, depictions of the sacred person of the emperor figure in the scene of the emperor’s robing, when dressed in the robes of state (ibid. 2.90-120) by Armatius, Corippus describes how Justin’s naked limbs glow, and this

⁶²*divinos stetit ante pedes dextraque coronam inposuit sanctoque caput diademate cinxit* (1.37-38); the ritual of being crowned by the Theotokos is first attested in Corippus and reflects the actual crowning of the emperor later in book 2 of the *In laudem*.

⁶³Averil Cameron, *In laudem Iustini Augusti minoris*, 129; on the *imago Pietatis*, cf. Ulrich Stache, *Flavius Cresconius Corippus in laudem Iustini Augusti minoris: ein Kommentar*, 90-91.

⁶⁴Mary Whitby, “The Occasion of Paul the Silentiary’s Ekphrasis of S. Sophia,” *The Classical Quarterly* 35, no. 1 (1985): 219, n. 24.

⁶⁵*Placere parenti orantis pia verba viri, genitusque precanti adnuit, et sanctus ‘Regato’ spiritus inquit* (2.43-45); *qui facit hoc, deus est: deus est in corde regentum* (2.425); for the connection between God and emperor, Vincent Zarini, “L’Éclogie de l’Empereur Justin II et de l’Impératrice Sophie chez Corippe et chez Venant Fortunat (*Poèmes*, Appendice 2),” *Camenae* 11 (April, 2012): 2-3.

parallels the corpse of Justinian, which is said to preserve, “the awesome marks of his life...shining with his customary brightness.”⁶⁶

In my introduction I referred to a major debate in the study of Late Antiquity about the continuity of traditional Roman values or *Romanitas* among the learned elite. Scholars have long considered whether Corippus represents the last of the secular Latin poets of North Africa to engage with this system of values. Heinz Hoffman’s important study in this regard placed Corippus at the end of what he termed “secular historiographical epic,” he focused on Claudian the fourth-century poet who popularized panegyric in Latin verse, and this began a continuous tradition of elaborate hexameter panegyric that increasingly took on elements of other genres such as epic poetry (e.g. elaborate descriptions, stricter hexameter rules, mythological digressions).⁶⁷ Corippus’s mixing of classical and Christian themes first in the *Iohannis* and more so in the *In laudem* point toward a break from tradition that would corroborate with the general Christianizing trends in sixth-century material, from historiography to epigrams.

It is likely that the survival of his panegyric, when so many of the other supposed sixth-century Latin panegyrics (e.g. those of John Lydus) no longer remain, was a result of the Christian elements that proved attractive to his later Visigoth and possibly Frankish copyists. The intermixing of imagery that hearkens to traditional Roman virtues of rulers and Christian rhetoric regularly featured in the literature of the sixth century was the topic of a noteworthy study by Averil Cameron, where she argued for a kind of “cultural fusion,” whereby court culture continued to develop under the influence of transformations in imperial

⁶⁶*Sic suprema suae servans insignia vitae Iustinianus <erat>, non mutans morte colorem, sed solito candore nitens (In laudem 1.236-8).*

⁶⁷For the discussion of secular historiographical epic, Heinz Hofmann, “Überlegungen zu einer Theorie der nichtchristlichen Epik der lateinischen Spätantike,” *Philologus* 132 (1988): 101-159; for later development of mixed genre in Byzantine literature, and how they can be appreciated, Panagiotis Agapitos, “Ancient Models and Novel Mixtures: The Concept of Genre in Byzantine Funerary Literature,” in *Modern Greek Literature. Critical Essays*, eds. G. Nagy and A. Stavrakopoulou (New York: Routledge, 2003): 5–23.

taste. The process is reflected in many aspects of society of the era, and Cameron argued that the transformations by cultural fusion were especially prominent during the period of Justin II and Sophia's rule, who were sponsors of many large-scale religious art projects; Corippus's *In laudem* was likely one of these sponsored projects, a major tour de force in the development of Christian hexameter poetry. The conclusion reached by Averil Cameron is that this period was a point of departure from the prior centuries of Late Antiquity, when competing world views allowed for elites to engage both with Christianity (in its multitude of forms) and pagan antiquity.⁶⁸

Part Two: Justin II and the "Senatorial Coup"

The regime change emerged in the middle of the night and achieved a powerful lobby for the election of Justin II as the successor to Justinian; all the elements of this process of transition in Corippus appear to be the result of a smooth and unproblematic regime change. There were, however, many major domestic and international crises: the most pressing issues for the parties involved were economic reform, new negotiations with foreign powers and a return to orthodoxy after Justinian's promulgation of anathematism in 565.⁶⁹ Corippus focuses the central actions of the first and second book on the procedures of enthronement, and he emphasizes senatorial consent.⁷⁰ The new imperial ideology of this regime change comes out very clearly in the first three books of the *In laudem*, where at the beginning of the sequence of the first book the eunuch Calinicus, who had served as the eunuch of the bedchamber under Justinian, together with some of the senators approached the newly built

⁶⁸Averil Cameron, "Corippus' *Iohannis*: Epic of Byzantine Africa," in *Papers of the Liverpool Latin Seminar* (Liverpool: Francis Cairns Publications, 1984): 167-180.

⁶⁹Adopted in 565, a doctrine that Christ's nature was incapable of suffering and sin, but was human; for Justinian's heresy, cf. Evagrius Scholasticus, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 4.39.

⁷⁰The scribal *periochae* in the MS Matritensis describes the outline of these events; the senators compel Justin under the leadership of Calinicus that it might be possible for the senate to choose Justin as emperor; the heading goes on to describe how *et custodis ad strepitum cum indignatione responsis*, "and guards came in indignation as a response to their noise"; for an overview of coronation rituals, A.E.R. Boak, "Imperial Coronation Ceremonies of the Fifth and Sixth Centuries," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 30 (1919): 38.

palace of the Sophiae in the dead of night to convey the message to Justin of his uncle's death (*In laudem* 1.75-96).⁷¹ The action moves suddenly as the city awakens and news rapidly spreads to a confused populace, many of whom must have spent the majority of their lives under the rule of Justinian.⁷²

Details of the regime's machinations for assuming power reverberate through Corippus's carefully planned poetic program, which attempts to legitimize the ascension of Justin II every step of the way. The gathering of the senators before Justin, entreating him and showing their consent (*ibid.* 1.155), is followed by the circus factions (*ibid.* 1.345-365) and eventually the whole population of Constantinople (*ibid.* 1.345).⁷³ In a sign of church obeisance, Justin II is blessed by the Patriarch John Scholasticus (*ibid.* 2.159) before being raised upon the shield by the *excubitores*, which as Corippus remarks, caused him to appear erect like the letter "I", which is "sacred to all three names" of Justin I, Justinian and now Justin II.⁷⁴ While the crisis of Justinian's unnamed heir was a significant detail that the senate behind closed doors had to overcome, these ceremonies were typical features of fifth and sixth century coronations established since the time of Leo I (r. 457-474).⁷⁵

Corippus emphasizes the surprise and fear of the people that Justinian has passed away, and there is a rapid attempt to bring the news to the newly selected successor. Justin,

⁷¹Calinicus was the chief of the eunuchs of the bedchamber and a patron of John of Ephesus; Averil Cameron notes that he was already the subject of a notable epigram by Leontius Scholasticus (*Anthologia Plan.* 33), and appears later in *In laudem* 4.333, Averil Cameron, *In laudem Iustini Augusti minoris*, 132.

⁷²For the portrayal of this sudden strategic move, and the likelihood that Justin and Sophia knew ahead of time that Justinian would pass away, Kurt Groh, *Geschichte des östromeischen Kaisers Justin II* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1889): 42-43.

⁷³For the debate on the emergence of a *Soldatenkaisertum* in the history of Roman politics from the time of Constantine the Great, Hans-Georg Beck, "Senat und Volk von Konstantinopel," *Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften Sitzungsberichte* 6 (1966): 6-7; Beck sees the reign of Leo as a transition period for the emergence of the ritual of electing an emperor before the Senate, the army and the people, *ibid.* 11-12.

⁷⁴Averil Cameron points out that Justin II who held the office of *curopalates*, confers this title immediately to his protégé Tiberius, *In laudem Iustini Augusti minoris*, 95; for mention elsewhere of Tiberius in the *In laudem* of the *excubitores*, 3.165 and 4.239-40.

⁷⁵The same sequence of events occurred for the coronation of Justin I after the death of Anastasius, as Malalas records at 17.1: "At God's command the army with the excubitores guarding the palace, together with the people, crowned him and made him emperor," *Chronicle*, trans. Elizabeth Jeffreys et al. (Melbourne: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 1986): 230; for a discussion of the implements of coronation as they developed from Justinian to Justin II, Richard Delbrueck, "Der spätantike Kaiserornat," *Die Antike* 8 (1932): 4-5.

in fact, is the only character in the first books of the *In laudem* to see very clearly the reality of the situation. Corippus uses the funeral arrangements for Justinian (e.g. the display of his corpse, the description of his funeral shroud, his funeral ceremony etc.) to frame the activities of the imperial couple, and it appears based on the comments of many sources that the furtive and rapid strategy of the senatorial faction worked effectively.⁷⁶ The North African chronicler Victor of Tunnuna remarked that with the utmost peacefulness of the people's consent (*cum tranquillitate populi maxima*) Justin II assumed imperial power and Sophia was confirmed.⁷⁷ Evagrius Scholasticus remarked how "No one knew of the departure of Justinian or of the proclamation of Justin except those around him, until the time when he appeared in the hippodrome going through all the customary rites of imperial rule" (*Ecclesiastical History*, 5.1).⁷⁸ The entourage of those "around him" (ἄμφ' αὐτόν), whom Justin in his coronation speech later referred to as the limbs of the body-politic closest to him (*proxima membra mihi*), "you senators, the greatest hope for our reign, you are the chest, the arms of this head of ours, by whose counsel and by whose labors the Republic tames nations and subjects kingdoms."⁷⁹ Justin promises to commit to the senators some duties for overseeing the rule of the empire: "we also grant the cares of the world to you."⁸⁰

The new regime needed in its early years to legitimize Justin's right of succession due to his relative lack of credentials compared to other rivals (e.g. Justin's cousin Justin the son of Germanus). The party in favor of Justin needed to move quickly and protect its interests. Corippus builds on the themes of Latin panegyric to extol the emperor for his previous career under his uncle Justinian. The actual role that Justin II played while serving under Justinian

⁷⁶Averil Cameron, *In laudem Iustini Augusti minoris*, 126.

⁷⁷Victor of Tunnuna, *Chronica Minora vol. II*, ed. Theodorus Mommsen (Berlin: MGH, 1894): 206.

⁷⁸Evagrius Scholasticus, *Ecclesiastical History*, trans. Michael Whitby (Liverpool University Press, 2000): 254-255.

⁷⁹*Vos o mihi proxima membra, conscripti patres, nostri spes maxima regni, vos estis pectus, vos brachia verticis huius, quorum consiliis quorumque laboribus usa publica res domuit gentes et regna subegit* (2.200-204).

⁸⁰*nos etiam vobis curas committimus orbis* (2.207).

had far less impact than the poet would have his audience believe. The senatorial faction around Justin II had the difficult task in the early years of the reign to legitimize an emperor as the rightful successor, for whom the right to succeed was never granted by the prior emperor. The fact that Justinian had not chosen a successor did not stop Corippus from claiming that word of Justinian's approval for Justin II came through Calinicus in the immediate aftermath of the emperor's death (*In laudem* 1.226). The claim of rightful succession may not have been sufficient for everyone in Constantinople, however, and so Corippus emphasizes the influence that Justin II already had from an early period, claiming "in practice you were already Caesar."⁸¹ The view that Justin II had already operated with heavy influence under Justinian was a blatant exaggeration on the part of Corippus; Justin had on the contrary been relatively obscure at court and denied succession by Justinian, who granted him only the office of *Curopolates*.⁸² Evidence for rivals to Justin's legitimacy come out in the text; for, while Corippus makes it appear that Justin had the support of the senators following Calinicus in book one, there was still a need for the *excubitores* under Justin II's protégé Tiberius to protect entrance of the palace, lest the unworthy should try to enter.⁸³

Corippus in the *praefatio* of the *In laudem* emphasizes the ability of Justin II to cure without medicine the wounds of his (Corippus's) many years (*praef.*45-6); such a sentiment reflects the hope of the senatorial class in Justin II's promises to manage the affairs of the state finances more prudently than the prior administration.⁸⁴ The economic crisis of Justinian's later years made his policies unpopular among many influential court officials (e.g. the conspiracy of Ablabius, Marcellus and Sergius against Justinian in 562).⁸⁵

⁸¹*dispositu nam Caesar eras* (1.138)

⁸²For the *Curopolates*, Averil Cameron, *In laudem Iustini Augusti minoris*, 135.

⁸³Averil Cameron, introduction to *In laudem Iustini Augusti minoris*, 5; Corippus stresses the loyalty of the young Tiberius to Justin; for the role of Tiberius at the coronation, *In laudem* 1.205-225.

⁸⁴Serge Antès, introduction to *Éloge de l'empereur Justin II*, xxi-xxii.

⁸⁵ Cf. Praef. 50-70, Paul Silentiary, *Description of Hagia Sophia*, where the plot is treated as an affront to God; for the full account, 18.141 in Malalas's *Chronicle* (493 in Dindorf's edition).

Procopius in the *Secret History* recalled the vision of one court official of the emperor swallowing up the finances of the empire as though draining the Golden Horn (*Secret History* 19.1-10).⁸⁶ Corippus, however, reminds his present audience of the promises that Justin II made in his speech on the economy. Following the traditional proceedings of acclamation, the coronation speech at 2.175 is essentially Justin's declaration of reform couched in highly rhetoricized language.⁸⁷ He promises to care for the body-politic, and here I provide the conclusion (ibid. 2.259-271) where Justin claims to be the head of the body-politic (ibid. 2.214) and offers the constituent elements of the empire his cure from disease (ibid. 2.193):

“Many things were too much neglected while my father was alive,⁸⁸ and as a result the exhausted treasury contracted so many debts, which we propose, moved by piety, to restore to the unfortunate people. Let the world rejoice that whatever was done or put into practice because of our father's old age has been corrected in the time of Justin. The old man no longer cared: he was altogether cold and only grew warm with love of another life. All his mind was fixed on heaven.⁸⁹ We allow no one to do harm to the holy treasury, nor anyone to be harmed in the name of the treasury.”⁹⁰

The immediate action of the administration's economic policy is reflected in *Novella* 148 dated to 566, where the new policy of “releasing from delinquent debts” pairs with taking care of the military affairs by removing the burden of some of Justinian's tributary treaties with barbarian peoples, especially with the Avars.⁹¹

One of the central demands of the senatorial party was a more aggressive foreign policy. In the final sections of the narrative sequence of the *In laudem*, Corippus shows the

⁸⁶The theme of Justinian's greed is the subject of the nineteenth chapter of the *Secret History*; a similar sentiment can be found in the panegyric *Buildings* where the emperor “disregarded any question of expense” when building the Hagia Sophia after the Nika Riot of 532 (1.23), *On Buildings*, ed. H.B. Dewing. (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1940): 13.

⁸⁷One of John of Ephesus's chief criticisms for Justin II was his economic policy for accumulating wealth; 3.2, *The third part of the Ecclesiastical History of John Bishop of Ephesus*, trans. R. P. Smith, 166.

⁸⁸Justin refers to Justinian as father as if following a tradition of direct imperial descent; Averil Cameron noted that this was a possible strategy on Corippus's part since Justin never achieved the rank of Caesar under Justinian, Averil Cameron, *In laudem Iustini Augusti minoris*, 185, n. 132.

⁸⁹This reflects the sentiment of Procopius who in the *Buildings* commends the pious Justinian for putting the church in order (*Buildings* 1.9); in a reversal to the *logos panegyricos* Justinian was regularly the object of veiled criticism as in the case of Tribonianus's remarks, Cf. *Secret History* Ch. 13.

⁹⁰Fl. Cresconius Corippus, *In laudem Iustini Augusti minoris*, trans. Averil Cameron, 99.

⁹¹For the payments to the Avars, the Huns and the Lachmid Arabs of *In laudem* 3.231-398, Serge Antés, Introduction to *Éloge de l'empereur Justin II*, xxviii-xxxii.

new emperor in action fulfilling the requirements of his newly acquired office. The activity of the new emperor contrasts sharply with the burial of Justinian, the description of whose body is far more cursory in this book than the extended ekphrasis of the funeral shroud offered in book two.⁹²

The claims in the imperial decree according to Evagrius's *Historia Ecclesiastica* of victory over the Alamani, Goths, Germans, Berbers, Franks, Huns, and the Gepids cannot be taken too seriously, but it shows how far the regime sought to change the course of affairs in the region.⁹³ The first ascension of Justin II to the imperial throne is followed by his first foreign policy decision, when he responds to the embassy of the Avars.⁹⁴ Corippus throughout the first books of the *In laudem* caters to the need of making the emperor a victorious figure at the time of his early rule for his senatorial supporters; as such the emperor's mind is concerned with war (*In laudem* 1.260). This combination of imagery was part of a wider program reflecting the power shift that was happening in Constantinople at the time, and is evident in the coinage of the reign featuring claims of victory and long life for the emperor.⁹⁵ The fragmentary history of Menander Protector contains elements of the official rhetoric when the historian recalls that when the Avars had threatened and boasted to Justin II of their previous arrangements with Justinian, the emperor responded in turn, "Yet I shall give you more than my father (i.e. Justinian)...and I shall teach you a proper moderation."⁹⁶ The motifs of victory and subjugation of the enemy are no surprise in a

⁹²Kurt Groh, *Geschichte des oströmischen Kaisers Justin II*, 39-40.

⁹³These titles are the same used by Justinian in his *On the correct Faith*, E. Schwartz, *Drei dogmatische Schriften Justinians* (Munich: Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1939): 72. For the third and fourth-century panegyrics and the praise of imperial virtues in war, R. Seager, "Some Imperial Virtues in the Latin Prose Panegyrics," *Papers of the Liverpool Latin Seminar* (Liverpool University Press, 1984): 129-166.

⁹⁴6.24, John of Ephesus, *The Third Part of the Ecclesiastical History*, trans. R. P. Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1860): 176-8.

⁹⁵The Gold Solidus and the Semissis contained the theme of victory and the victorious emperor on the obverse, Warwick Wroth, *Catalogue of the Imperial Coins in the British Museum: in two volumes*, Vol. 1. (London: British Museum, 1908): 75-77.

⁹⁶*Excerptum de Legibus Gent.* 5, Menander the Guardsman (*Protector*), *The History of Menander the Guardsman*, trans. R.C. Blockley (Liverpool: Francis Cairns Publications, 1985): 95; eventually this policy backfires

panegyric, but the emphasis Corippus places on victory in war (e.g. as the crowd exclaims *Tu vincas, Iustine!* 1.358) corroborates with a climate of jingoism surrounding the power shift from Justinian.⁹⁷ The same sense of imperial triumph is repeated by Agathias in the preface to his *Cycle*, which was likely produced in the years after Justin's coronation.

Justin II's early religious policy matched his economic amnesty. Evagrius Scholasticus writes that at the beginning of his reign in 565/66 the first ruling of Justin, once he established control, was to free priests and bid them to return to their sees on the condition that they should not introduce any innovations.⁹⁸ The new administration advised that "God especially is to be worshiped with your every effort, he is always to be adored, to be ever feared, to be loved."⁹⁹ One particular concern for the senatorial audience that is present in the source material was to repeal some of the unpopular legislative efforts of Justinian.¹⁰⁰ Disocorus of Aphrodito in his poem in honor of Justin II praised the emperor as "Life-giving" and bringing "to brave men and their happy wives the joy of freedom to banish care and of help for our painful failures."¹⁰¹

If the argument for a separate presentation of the first three books of the *In laudem* really does hold up to the historical context, then the composition provides a unique vantage point from which to investigate where Corippus as an author departs in the fourth book. Justin II was not a man equal to the temperament of his uncle, and this comes across in the majority of sources with the exception of Corippus. There are definite elements among the newly reinvigorated senatorial elite who set about realizing their motives, and for whom the

disastrously with a renewed conflict against the Persians leading to the fall of the fortress of Dara, H Turtledove, "Justin II's observance of Justinian's Persian treaty of 562," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 76, no. 2 (1983): 292-301.

⁹⁷This was the customary victory acclamation given by the Senate and the People of Constantinople in the Hippodrome since the time Leo I, Cf. Beck, "Senat und Volk," 13-14.

⁹⁸5.1, Evagrius Scholasticus, *The Ecclesiastical History*, trans. Michael Whitby (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000): 195.

⁹⁹*In primis deus est tota virtute colendus, semper adorandus, semper metuendus, amandus* (2.209-10).

¹⁰⁰Leslie MacCoull, *Dioscorus of Aphrodito His Work and His World* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1988): 75, n. 12; for the possible allusions to Justin II's religious policies, "A Trinitarian formula in Dioscorus of Aphrodito," *Bulletin de la Société d'Archéologie Copte* 24 (1982): 103-110.

¹⁰¹P.Cair.Masp. II 67183, *Dioscorus of Aphrodito*, trans. Leslie MacCoull, 73.

praise of Justin II meant the continuity of their influence. Corippus directly appeals to this class of senatorial elite in Constantinople by way of the new ideology and literary tastes of the era, which combined the traditional virtues of *Romanitas* with *topoi* of Christian rhetoric. Throughout the first three books Corippus as an author aware of his patrons' demands, follows the action of the coronation with Justin's first act as consul of Constantinople in order to remind his audience of the role that Justin played in these early days, when he repaired the fragile economic and ecclesiastical situation of Justinian's last years of rule. How this propaganda could reach its audience abroad, and especially the ecclesiastical elite of the empire is the question I address in the following chapters.

Chapter Two: a *Grammaticus Africanus* in the City of the Emperor

In the second chapter of this thesis I discuss the African and Constantinopolitan contexts of the poem. I delve into the relation between the imperial ideology found in the *In laudem* and the problematic relationship of Constantinople and Africa Proconsularis during the second half of the sixth century. In order to answer these questions, I briefly discuss the historical background and the lead-up to the Fifth Ecumenical Council of Constantinople (553) and the Three Chapters Controversy (543/44), when the African bishops were among the most vocal opponents to the new aggressive direction of Justinian's ecclesiastical program and the influence of church officials surrounding him. Corippus as a North African spending some period of time in Constantinople provides a valuable case study from which to analyze some of the responses among North Africans during the previous regime, and their situation with regards to Constantinople during the early years of Justin II. In several recent studies on the topic of this controversy questions of *Romanitas Africana* have emerged, which point toward a unique understanding among the Romanized elite of North Africa (the *Afri* or Libyans) of what it means to be Roman as opposed to Berber or even Arian Vandal. One possible strain of this unique *Romanitas Africana* was a tradition of Latin commentators called the *doctores*, who followed a stricter adherence to the authority of prior church councils. I argue in the following chapter that Corippus may fit within this Romanized African milieu, and that his reaction to Justin II's return to orthodoxy following Justinian and his early moves toward general pardon of many ecclesiastical figures is reflected in the more open approval of book four of the *In laudem* toward the early religious policy of Justin II.

Part One: *Romanitas Africana* and Ecclesiastical Controversy

The rapid reconquest of North Africa by the Romans in the 530s provided the impetus for an attempt to reunify the empire not only territorially but in ecclesiastical matters (from the 540s until Arab expansion).¹⁰² The combined imperial project was jolted into action when Belisarius in a seemingly miraculous reconquest of the region with a much smaller contingent of soldiers rapidly won back the region from an unprepared Vandal government. The weak control of the Vandals over the Romanized Africans (the *Afri*) had been compromised both by the disastrous effects of Berber raids and by the renewed persecutions against the staunchly Chalcedonian African clergy during the time of King Huneric (r. 477–484).¹⁰³ The literary witness to the successful campaign against the last of the Vandal Kings, Gelimer (r. 530–534), was the *Vandal Wars* by the historian Procopius, which matches Corippus's *Iohannis* as one of the most important sources on late Vandal North Africa.¹⁰⁴ The *Codex Justinianus* is evidence for the belief that the divine hand of God acted in the reconquest of North Africa, which “the omnipotent God for us on behalf of praising him and his name deemed worthy to reveal. It surpasses all wonderful deeds that occurred in this period (*in saeculo*), that Africa may receive in such a short time its freedom.”¹⁰⁵ The same sentiment is recalled by Corippus for the great general, who achieved already a semi-legendary status by the time of the *Iohannis*: “On that

¹⁰²Merrills uses Procopius' *Buildings* as evidence for the shifting of the border further north, cf. A. Merrills, “Gelimer's slaughter: the case for late Vandal Africa,” in *North Africa under Byzantium and Early Islam* (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 2016): 33-34.

¹⁰³The persecutions of Huneric in Victor of Vita 3.44-46, *History of the Persecutions*, trans. John Moorhead (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1992): 81-82.

¹⁰⁴Cf. a recent discussion of the use of the complex use and abuse of the propaganda of liberation by Procopius in the *Vandal Wars* by Anthony Kaldellis, “Procopius's *Vandal War*: *Thematic Trajectories and Hidden Transcripts*,” in *North Africa under Byzantium and Early Islam* (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 2015): 17-18.

¹⁰⁵*quod nunc deus omnipotens per nos pro sua laude et pro suo nomine demonstrare dignatus est, excedit omnia mirabilia opera, quae in saeculo contigerunt, ut Africa per nos tam brevi tempore reciperet libertatem, Cod. Just. 1.27.2.*

shore the ranks of Romans once stood when Belisarius reached the shores of Libya (1.366-7).”¹⁰⁶

Recent studies have set North Africa within the context of Late Antiquity as an integral region of the Roman Mediterranean before and after the Vandal interlude, which did not lose its connections to the rest of the Mediterranean as rapidly as previous scholarship attempted to demonstrate.¹⁰⁷ There was, however, internal disunity: Romanized Africans adhering to the dyophysite interpretation of Christology pitted themselves on the one hand against the Arian Vandals and the still pagan Berber tribes, and on the other against those of their fellow Romanized Africans who retained ties to the Donatist Controversy.¹⁰⁸ The autochthonous population of Berbers and Moors began in Late Antiquity to form embryonic states, adapting legal systems, and acquiring religious belief systems for social and political cohesion.¹⁰⁹ Corippus in his poem *Iohannis* narrated the defeat of the Moors at the hands of the Roman expeditionary force in North Africa; in views that were typical of his fellow Romanized North African countrymen Corippus characterizes the cruel character of the Moors who seek the mountains as their refuge rather than engage with the Romans in open battle.¹¹⁰ The ideology of a universal Christian Roman empire continued to hold a dominating cohesive force over the social elite of the Romanized urban North African population. Corippus’s heavy borrowing from classical precedent is evidence of this, especially in the *Iohannis*, where he repeats the

¹⁰⁶*Illo Romanae steterant in litore classes tempore quo Libycas tetigit Belisarius oras*; see also *In laudem* 2.125.

¹⁰⁷For recent collections of work on North Africa in Late Antiquity, *Vandals, Romans and Berbers : new perspectives on late antique North Africa*, ed. A. H. Merrills, Ashgate (Burlington, Vt: 2004); *North Africa under Byzantium and Early Islam*, eds. Susan Stevens and Jonathan Conant, Dumbarton Oaks (Washington, D.C.: 2016).

¹⁰⁸North Africans were historically divided by confessional and doctrinal disagreements between the Donatists, who under the influence of the schismatic bishop Donatus Magnus (died ca. 355) took a hard-liner stance against non-Donatists representing the reestablished church in North Africa following the death of emperor Diocletian; this is what William Frend described as the emergence of a church of Martyrs versus a church of Bishops, William Frend, “From Donatist Opposition to Byzantine Loyalism: the Cult of the Martyrs in North Africa 350-650,” in *Vandals, Romans, Berbers*, ed. A.H. Merrills (London: Ashgate, 2004): 259-61.

¹⁰⁹For the labeling of Berbers in the *Iohannis*, which is an important source for the ethnography of the Berber tribes, J. Partsch, “Die Berbern bei Corippus,” in *Satura Viadrina* (Breslau: Vereins zu Breslau, 1896): 20-38.

¹¹⁰For the campaign against Antalas prince of the Moors see *Iohannis* 2.20-52.

topoi of Roman liberation and expansion that were characteristic of the traditional sense of *Romanitas* current among the governing elite.¹¹¹

A fateful test of this *Romanitas* came only fifteen years after the reconquest of Africa under Belisarius. During the ecclesiastical affair among dissenting factions of ecclesiastic leaders in Constantinople, the African bishops very strongly rejected the political moves of the Constantinopolitan leadership at the Fifth Ecumenical Council of Constantinople (552/553). The African bishops joined in varying forms of resistance to Constantinople, from Facundus of Hermiane, who published an extensive *Defense of the Three Chapters*, to Liberatus of Carthage, whose *Breviarium* is hostile toward Justinian and especially the empress Theodora.¹¹² The bishop Pontianus during the Three Chapters Controversy sent a letter to Emperor Justinian in 544-5 complaining that news of the recent turn of events had not reached “those of us who dwell in Africa.”¹¹³ Pontianus’s letter is not evidence of ignorance per se on the part of the African ecclesiastical leaders, it is evidence rather of a deep-seated interest among the African clergy for understanding the debates current in Constantinople.¹¹⁴ An important recent explanation for this resistance to imperial influence is the learned tradition of Christian exegesis in North Africa. In a recent Dumbarton Oaks volume on *Byzantine and Early Islamic North Africa* Leslie Dossey took the position that the Three Chapters Controversy in Africa arose from the eagerness that the North-African *doctores* had for interpretation and debate of scripture, which may have been the result of Vandal interruption in the region, unlike

¹¹¹*Iohannis* in book one where Corippus describes the court of the emperor in Constantinople; Romano Dodi in an article on African *Romanitas* discussed the classicizing elements with regard to the portrayal of Justinian as an emperor in the Augustan Era, Cf. “Corippo Poeta della ‘Romanitas’ Africana,” *Aevum* 60, no. 1 (1986): 113; for the propagandistic elements of Corippus’s *Iohannis*, cf. Peter Riedlberger, *Philologischer, historischer und liturgischer Kommentar zum 8. Buch der Iohannis des Goripp* (Groningen: Forsten, 2010): 90-96.

¹¹²Benjamin Gleede, “Liberatus’ Polemik gegen die Verurteilung der drei Kapitel und seine alexandrinische quelle. Einige Beobachtungen zu Breviarium 19-24,” *Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum* 14(2010): 96-129.

¹¹³*Nos in Africanis partibus commorantes* Migne, *Patrologia Latina* LXVII, 996-7; The Three Chapters consisted of the condemnations of the person and the writings of Theodore of Mopsuestia, the writings of Theodoret of Cyrillus opposed to the teachings of Cyril of Alexandria, and the Letter of Ibas of Edessa to Mari.

¹¹⁴A translation movement went on in North Africa and theology from Constantinople was systematically arranged as Victor of Vita’s excerpts in the *Liber de Fide Catholica* demonstrate in the *History of the Persecution*.

in other imperial provinces where the tradition of interpretive freedom waned due to increasingly direct and centralized imperial influence.¹¹⁵

Some of the most notable of these *doctors*, Pontianus, Fulgentius of *Ruspe*, Verecundus, and Facundus, initially rejected any approval of the Fifth Ecumenical Council. Victor of Vita under the Vandal occupation composed a summary of theology based on the developments in the wider Roman world, and he regularly employs the distinction of *doctor* for contemporary church authorities (cf. *doctor* Liberatus in Victor of Vita, *History of the Persecution* 3.50). North Africa bishops attained a degree of separation from the wider Roman world during the preceding century, and their resistance to Constantinople was fueled by a tradition of exegesis that differed, as Dossey argued, from Constantinople and other churches of the Greek-speaking Eastern Mediterranean.¹¹⁶

Corippus in the *Iohannis* is silent about these developments. This silence has struck some scholars as an attempt to avoid controversy with either his Roman patrons or his fellow North Africans. Another possible explanation would be that these matters were out of the scope of his historiographical epic at the time, although the same avoidance of doctrinal themes is not present in the *In laudem*. This is a reasonable assessment given the overall silence in secular source material in what has been termed a lost decade of the 550.¹¹⁷ Corippus approached his subject from the perspective of a specifically African *Romanitas*, from the perspective of a Romanized North African.¹¹⁸ Corippus was one individual to gain from the return of direct Roman rule via his career path as the poet behind the *Iohannis*, which met the expectations

¹¹⁵Leslie Dossey, "Exegesis and Dissent in Byzantine North Africa," in *North Africa under Byzantium and Early Islam*, eds. S. Stevens and J. Conant (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2015): 266.

¹¹⁶Leone Anna, "Bishops and Territory: The Case of Late Roman and Byzantine North Africa," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 65/66 (2011-2012): 5-27.

¹¹⁷For this "oddity about the literary history of Justinian's reign," Roger Scott, "Malalas, the Secret History and Justinian's Propaganda," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 39 (1985): 104-5.

¹¹⁸Dodi, Romano, "Corippo Poeta della 'Romanitas' Africana," *Aevum* 60, no. 1 (January-April, 1986): 111-119.

both of the local African elite and the office of the Roman *magister militum* under John Troglita; the best evidence for his success was his commission to compose the *In laudem*, in which he recalls briefly his prior work on the Libyan wars. Heinz Hofmann argued that the Constantinopolitan environment made Corippus's ambiguity with regard to Christology irrelevant since he no longer needed to avoid offending his African countrymen.¹¹⁹

The gradual disconnection between North Africa (specifically the Romanized urban elite) and the wider Roman world reduced the independent intellectual voice of North African Latin ecclesiastics, who were more often the leading *doctores* of the western churches prior to the Fifth Ecumenical Council and its consequences. Moreover, under the reign of Heraclius (r. 610-641) a new conflict arose, although much less preserved in the source material, over controversies surrounding the argument that Christ had only one divine will and two natures, or Monothelitism, and created a new series of confessional schisms among Western and Eastern churches.¹²⁰ The Three Chapters Controversy is one of the last major bodies of Latin ecclesiastical writings that survive from North Africa, and represents a key moment in the history of connectivity between Constantinople and its reconquered western provinces.

Part Two: Constantinopolitan Africans and the Generation of the 550s and 560s

Corippus was part of a significant population of North Africans active in Constantinople who besought the imperial administration for support in the aftermath of the disastrous effects of Berber conflict with the Roman government of Africa Pronconsularis. Corippus's *In laudem* betrays some memories of his homeland, and he uses these themes to elicit sympathy from the new emperor. In the *praefatio* he emphasizes the plight of Africans

¹¹⁹ Heinz Hofmann, "Corippus as a Patristic Author?" *Vigiliae Christianae* 43, no. 4 (Dec., 1989): 371.

¹²⁰ J.F. Haldon, *Byzantium in the Seventh Century; the Transformation of a Culture* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990): 56-59.

(the *Afri*, *Africani* and *Libya* being convenient metrical variations in the poet's corpus).¹²¹ An important appeal in the *In laudem* is Corippus's address at the beginning of the first book to the prefect Thomas. He inserts a miniature panegyric as follows:

“And to Thomas the support of Libya, a failing land (*terrae nutantis*),¹²² who established the hope for life that had slipped away and returned it to the Africans. He put peace in place, suppressed war without any soldier, and won with good counsel which no army could defeat (I.18-21).”¹²³

Ulrich Stache in his note on this passage emphasized the sympathy Corippus elicits for his fellow countrymen here; in Corippus's earlier *Iohannis*, the destruction of first the campaign against the Vandals and later the renewed Libyan wars were repeated themes.¹²⁴ The Thomas mentioned here in the *In laudem* may well be the *magister militum* who held office before the Prefect Theodorus who, according to John of Biclaro, the continuator of the *Chronicle* of Victor of Tunnuna, died in the third year of the reign of Justin.¹²⁵ The sentiment of these lines is similar to the *Panegyricum ad Anastasium*, where Corippus claims the collective citizens (*cives Afri*) of Africa enjoy the peace brought by their pious sovereigns (Pan. Anast. 38-40).¹²⁶

There are only a few substantial clues that can illuminate Corippus's career in Constantinople, but any elucidation of the length of his stay there would contribute toward a fuller understanding of his relationship with the new administration. Is it at all possible to speculate at what time he arrived in Constantinople? In his *Praefatio* to Justin Corippus remarks on how he was bereft of property and an old man by the time he wrote the first portions

¹²¹For the usage according to the tradition of Virgilian Hexameters, Ulrich Stache, *Flavius Cresconius Corippus in laudem Iustini Augusti minoris: ein Kommentar*, 81.

¹²²*Africa sub magno nutabat fessa periclo (Iohannis 1.27).*

¹²³*et Thomas Libyae nutantis destina terrae, qui lapsam statuit vitae spem reddit Afri, pacem composuit, bellum sine milite pressit, vicit consiliis quos nullus vicerat armies.*

¹²⁴Ulrich Stache, *Flavius Cresconius Corippus in laudem Iustini Augusti minoris: ein Kommentar* (Berlin: Verlag Nikolaus Mielke, 1976): 80-81.

¹²⁵*Chronica Minora vol. II*, ed. Theodorus Mommsen (Berlin: MGH, 1894): 212; see the note of Averil Cameron, *In laudem Iustini Augusti Minoris*, 127; there is an important witness to the career of Thomas found in Agathias's *Cycle*, Averil Cameron and Alan Cameron, “The Cycle of Agathias,” *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 86 (1966): 9.

¹²⁶*generaliter orbi quamquam provideas, miseri specialiter Afri in te oculos atque ora ferunt* (Pan. Anast.); Ulrich Stache, *Flavius Cresconius Corippus in laudem Iustini Augusti minoris: ein Kommentar*, 80.

of the *In laudem*. Barry Baldwin argued that relying on these details in conjunction with the interpretation of the label *Grammaticus Africanus* may be untenable.¹²⁷ Baldwin argued further that the heaps of praise offered to the Quaestor Anastasius need not mean that Corippus was necessarily among his retinue, nor the other important personages Corippus mentions at the beginning of book one (1.10-25); there is, however, some evidence that Corippus in fact was familiar with the operations of court bureaucracy and must have been on some level given the extent of the details he provides from seemingly an insider's view of the early days of Justin II's rule. The fact that in the fourth book of the *In laudem* there is no mention of Anastasius, who lost his position as quaestor in 567, may also remove some doubt as to his connections in Constantinople, since he was able to maintain the commission of the *In laudem* for the possible separate presentation of the fourth book following the first consulship.

When Corippus arrived in the imperial city, what kind of contrast could he find with his homeland? Recent work on the ethnography of Constantinople has considered the demographic explosion of the city from its fourth century founding to its height in the sixth century, which some scholars estimate to have reached nearly one million inhabitants. During the sixth century a large number of the individuals associated with the sources available from Constantinople were not themselves native residents of the city but, within the still very interconnected Mediterranean of Late Antiquity, they eventually found their way to the imperial city in search of successful careers. Agathias, John Lydus, Procopius, and many more, migrated from various territories of the eastern Mediterranean to the capital after their routes of education in the provinces.¹²⁸ Even a provincial bureaucrat such as Dioscorus of Aphroditia found himself in the Constantinople of Justinian; in one surviving poem from his private

¹²⁷Barry Baldwin, "The Career of Corippus," *The Classical Quarterly* 28, no. 2 (1978): 372-376.

¹²⁸For this diversity of origins, Dimitriev Sviatoslav, "John Lydus and His Contemporaries on Identities and Cultures of Sixth-Century Byzantium," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 64 (2010): 27-42; for the generation of sources, Roger Scott, "Malalas, the Secret History and Justinian's Propaganda," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 39 (1985): 104-105.

archive he writes: “(Having) spent a whole year in the land of the Emperor, I have come, not like others, seeking riches.”¹²⁹ Agathias in his *Histories* remarks as well on these crowds of fortune seekers and provocateurs in the Constantinople of his day, who would crowd the bookstalls in front of the imperial stoa, where legal practitioners could be found.¹³⁰

The background to North African ecclesiastical presence in Constantinople began during the Vandal period, when series of migrations of Romanized elites, especially ecclesiastics, began to trickle out of Vandal occupied Africa, and this pattern of emigration appears to have risen after the Roman “liberation” of North Africa and the ensuing conflict with the Berber peoples.¹³¹ Evagrius Scholasticus reviewed the *Wars* of Procopius in his *Ecclesiastical History*, and spoke of how the famous historian had met with persecuted Chalcedonian Christian exiles from the Vandal Kingdom. Evagrius remarked that, “Procopius said that he actually had occasion to see them when they came to the emperor’s city after escaping there, and he had a discussion with them.”¹³² The meeting, therefore, between the societal elites of Constantinople and the North African refugees, as Corippus may well have been, was possible in the multi-lingual city of Constantinople, and is well attested.

The senatorial class of Constantinople engaged in an “Indian summer” of classical literary production during the early years of Justin II. John Madden in a monograph on one of the epigrammists, Macedonius Consul, commented on how “traditionalism...is merely one manifestation of the general conservatism – political, social and cultural – of Byzantium.”¹³³ Paired with this “conservatism” was a demand for production, and an imperial court receptive to artistic endeavors. The bureaucrat and legal expert John Lydus wrote about the emperor

¹²⁹Leslie MacCoull, *Dioscorus of Aphroditto*, 23-124.

¹³⁰Agathias *Histories*, 2.29.

¹³¹Victor of Vita in the *History of the Persecution* remarks on a number of such cases 2.41; the example of the bishop Quodvultdeus and his letter-writing from Italy is a notable example.

¹³²*The Ecclesiastical History of Evagrius Scholasticus*, trans. Michael Whitby (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000): 212-214; for further citations of the historian Procopius in Evagrius, cf. *Ibid.* 59, 218-20, 287.

¹³³John Madden, introduction to *Macedonius Consul* (Zürich: Georg Olms Verlag, 1995): 51-52.

Justinian's tastes, "For the emperor being good and liberal ἐλεύθερος, is naturally inclined to respect those who emulate him in descent, mode of life, and munificence in accordance with their capability κατὰ δύναμιν."¹³⁴ Corippus remarks in the *Iohannis* very much the same sentiment when he writes that the same emperor told General John Troglita: "When I am emperor, this state of ours provides rewards worthy of deeds of merit (*Iohannis* 1.132-4)."¹³⁵ Ambitious men of letters exercised their *dynamis* or "capability" in this competitive atmosphere vying for the interests of the liberal, or generous, emperor. Corippus's own account of the competing poets demonstrates this in the fourth book of the *In laudem*, where "Fortune will reward those who deserve it."¹³⁶ The targeted audience of these works was a highly elite and selective group, for whom sophistication was demonstrated by the intricacies of their rhetorical skills and knowledge of Roman traditions; as such Agathias appeals in his prefatory address to his *Cycle* to the "rich" whom he enjoins not to look with contempt upon the things he is accustomed to present at his poetical banquet, nor to allow his work to be sold off in the common market.¹³⁷

The culture of legal bureaucrats encouraged a kind of court snobbery and playful interest in tradition, mythography, and poetry. Agathias remarked in his *Histories* on his admiration for the poetry of Nonnos of Panopolis, the fifth century author of the forty-eight book epic *Dionysiaca*, whose mythography he termed the ancestor of the "new poetry" of his times (*Histories* 4.23.5).¹³⁸ I have already discussed the purist tendency of hexameter verse during the era, and it is my position that these literary interests are foundational for identifying

¹³⁴De Mag. 3.38, John Lydus, *On the Powers of The Magistracies of the Roman State*, trans. A. C. Brandy, (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1983): 190-91.

¹³⁵*Magistrum edocuit...res publica nostra praemia compensat merito condigna labori principe me.*

¹³⁶*Dignis fortuna favorum praebit*; Corippus continues: "and gratitude comes to the words fitly spoken," *et iustis successit gratia dictis* (*In laudem* 4.156-7).

¹³⁷"Shall I allow what I had prepared to lie uneaten and spoil, or shall I expose it in the middle of the market?" *The Greek Anthology*: vol. 1, trans and ed. W. R. Paton, (London: William Heinmann, 1920): 117-120.

¹³⁸These are the contemporary poets, Ταῦτα γὰρ οἱ τε πρότερον ποιηταὶ ᾗδουσι καὶ οἱ νέοι παραλαβόντες συνᾗδουσιν, whom Agathias also collected in his *Cycle*, cf. Agathias, *Histories* (praef.8).

the generation of sources from the time of Justin II, who are the same “new poets,” from whom Agathias collected epigrams during the 550s and 560s. There was a pessimistic strain of thought among these authors, and Agathias who wrote the *Histories* likely under the reign of Tiberius, saw the optimism of the early years of Justin II’s reign fade into repeated setbacks. Adopting the classical mode of Thucydidean style, he insists that the ruinous events of his *histories*, “will never leave our generation, but will continue for all time (*Histories*, 1.1.2).”¹³⁹ As for the language of the *In laudem*, the foundation of the University of Constantinople under Theodosius II had guaranteed the funding for sixteen Latin chairs of rhetoric, and the language continued to hold a certain prestige in the city where a class of bureaucrats functioning in Constantinople required at a minimum a working understanding of it.¹⁴⁰

Can Corippus be identified as one of this generation of poets in Constantinople? He claims in the *Praefatio* that he was bereft of property and came to Constantinople an older man; based on this information, scholars have estimated his birth around the beginning of the sixth century. Corippus apparently had passed enough education requirements to attain a post as a schoolteacher in Africa before being successful at gaining the attention of the Roman governance in Carthage, where in a time of peace (*tempore pacific*, *Iohannis* praef.2), and after the Berber Wars he performed his *Iohannis*, although, as he says, the fame of John Troglita had already spread to the stars (*Iohannis* praef.38). The latter claim is of course poetic license, but the *Iohannis* would need to have been performed at a time long enough after the immediate conflicts had been resolved. The crucial evidence here on dating the *Iohannis* is integral to identifying the age of the poet when he came some twenty years later to Constantinople. The

¹³⁹οἶμαι γὰρ οὐδὲ ἐπιλείψειν ποτὲ τὸν αἰῶνα ἡμῶν τὰ δὲ τοιάδε, μένειν δὲ ἐς αἰὲ καὶ ἀκμάζειν, ἔστ’ ἂν ἡ αὐτὴ φύσις ἀνθρώπων ᾗ, ἐπεὶ καὶ ἄνωθεν ἡμῖν, ὥς ἔπος εἰπεῖν, συνεισῆλθε τῷ βίῳ.

¹⁴⁰For the relevant legislation in the Theodosian Codex, *Habeat igitur auditorium specialiter nostrum in his primum, quos Romanae eloquentiae doctrina commendat*, Dat. III kal. mart. Constantinopoli Theodosio a. XI et Valentiniano cons. (425 febr. 27); also, CTh.6.21.0. *De professoribus, qui in urbe Constantinopolitana docentes ex lege meruerint comitivam*; for the use of Latin in Constantinople during the 560s and 570s, Serge Antès, introduction to *Éloge de l'empereur Justin II*, xxxii-xxxv.

earliest possible date for his birth would have been around the turn of the sixth century. If it is supposed that in 543 Corippus was already an accomplished poet in his period of *floruit* then the latest date of birth would have to be in the first decade of the century if not before, and if Corippus's old age is taken seriously at the beginning of the *Praefatio*, this would corroborate with the sequence of these events to set him in his 50s or 60s by the time he was active in Constantinople. In the *Panegricum ad Anastasium* Corippus asks his supposed patron to "read, oh high magister, and take up my cause. The *sanctio* recommends your servant to you (Pan. Anast. 44-46)."¹⁴¹ What this *sanctio* is remains a point of debate about whether Justinian commended Corippus after the production of the *Iohannis*.¹⁴² These estimates, while only rough guesses, place Corippus within a similar time-frame of Procopius and not Agathias, whom Alan Cameron has supposed to be in his thirties by the time he published the *Cycle* at the same time that Corippus published the fourth book of the *In Laudem* in 566 or 567. The generation of Procopius, John Lydus, and the Cycle Poets (Macedonius, Julian the Egyptian and others) saw the regime of Justinian through its period of glory and final years of paranoia on the part of the emperor; Corippus, however, unlike Procopius, saw the death of Justinian and the emergence of a new imperial administration.

Finally, there is an important strain of questioning to seek out any idea of whether Corippus had recourse to Greek texts while in Constantinople. This a difficult question to answer, but it would not be uncommon for a North African to master the "twin languages" as Corippus describes in the fourth book of the *In laudem* (4.154).¹⁴³ The *Iohannis* with a few

¹⁴¹*Lege summe magister et causam defende meam tibi sanctio vestrum commendat famulum*, Barry Baldwin cautions against over-interpretation of Corippus's connection to Anastasius, "The Career of Corippus," *The Classical Quarterly* 28, no. 2 (1978): 373.

¹⁴²Averil Cameron (*pace* B. Baldwin) defends her reading of the verb *commendat* as the language of patronage, "The Career of Corippus Again," *The Classical Quarterly* 30, no. 2 (1980): 538; she also notes the technical sense of *famulum* in patronage relationships, *ibid.* 537.

¹⁴³For examples of multi-lingual Constantinople, Cf. F. Millar, and J.N. Adams, "Linguistic Co-existence in Constantinople: Greek and Latin (and Syriac) in the Acts of the Synod of 536 C.E.," *The Journal of Roman Studies* 99 (2009): 92-103.

exceptions in the usage of technical terms and the possible influence of translations from speeches does not reveal extensive Greek influence.¹⁴⁴ The *In laudem*, however, in addition to occasional technical terms like *syngrapha* (2.368), bears a number of possible Greek source texts.¹⁴⁵ The importance of the question of whether Corippus had the ability to use Greek sources relates to whether he interacted at court with the latest developments in theology, especially centered on the promulgation of Justin's Constantinopolitan creed.¹⁴⁶ The connection between Corippus's text and the promulgation of orthodoxy undertaken at the beginning of Justin II's reign is one of the main topics that I pursue in the following chapter.

¹⁴⁴Note, however, the possible Greek influence on the word *Populi* meaning *Milites* in the sense of λαοί, cf. E. Appel, *Exegetisch-kritische Beiträge zu Corippus* (Munich: Straub, 1904): 26.

¹⁴⁵On the use of Menander Rhetor, E. Appel, *Exegetisch-kritische Beiträge zu Corippus*, 9-11.

¹⁴⁶A gradual process of Hellenization came to affect North Africa profoundly during this era if not for a brief century in the more than five-hundred years of Latin Christianity, Averil Cameron, "Cameron, Averil, "Corippus' Iohannis: Epic of Byzantine Africa," in *Papers of the Liverpool Latin Seminar 4*, ed. Francis Cairns (Liverpool: Francis Cairns Publications, 1984): 170.

Chapter Three: the Return to Orthodoxy of *In laudem* Book 4

The audience of North African ecclesiastical leaders discussed in the previous chapter, which was eager to see a return to a more standard Chalcedonian formulation of Christology, was linked with the similar agenda of the senatorial elite that lobbied for Justin II in the “senatorial coup” of 565. In chapter one I discussed the entourage of those senators “around him” (ἄμφ’ αὐτόν) as per Evagrius Scholasticus’s account, who included the various individuals Corippus addressed in the first book of the *In laudem* (1.1-25), and to whom a largess was granted by the imperial regime as a token of their support in the fourth book (4.100-113). I now proceed to discuss the religious policy of Justin II and its implications for Corippus’s reception of the so-called Creed of Constantinople. The creed is recorded extant in the fifth book of the *Ecclesiastical History* of Evagrius Scholasticus, and Corippus’s paraphrase (4.291-311) of this confession is the most extant contemporary witness preserved in Latin. The creed was a modification from the *On the Correct Faith* of Justinian (ca. 551-553), and Justin II’s version provides valuable perspectives of the new rapprochement of the administration with dyophysite church leaders in Constantinople.¹⁴⁷

Part One: Justin II and the Return to Orthodoxy

A later date for the fourth book of the *In laudem* provides another opportune window into the political and ecclesiastical developments in Constantinople during the early reign. The scholarly consensus is that Corippus performed this book some time after January 1st, 566 at

¹⁴⁷Eduard Schwarz, *Drei dogmatische Schriften Iustinians* (Munich: Verlag der bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1939): 72-110; for the problematic dating of the text of the *On the Correct Faith*, Richard Price, *The Acts of the Council of Constantinople of 553* (Liverpool University Press, 2010): 122-3.

the beginning of Justin II's first consulship and before his second consulship in 568.¹⁴⁸ The separation of these first three books as has been established by the scholarship, contributes toward a better understanding of the dynamics of administration change and how Justin II and Sophia moved quickly between the years 565 and 567 to secure power and cultivate an aura of divinely sanctioned rule through the propagandistic use of imperial panegyric.

A parallel text that can clarify this development is found in the collection of epigrams in Agathias's *Cycle*, where the same victorious imagery of Corippus is present in a more developed form and in a nod to a more glorious past Agathias praises Justin for a peace from Persia as far as "Cadiz and the Spanish Strait and Ocean Thule"; even more, the Roman traveler may go "unescorted over the whole continent and leap in triumph."¹⁴⁹ The complex textual tradition of the *Anthologia* makes any certain dating of epigrams from the time of Agathias' *Cycle* ultimately unprovable, but much of the arguments that Alan and Averil Cameron employed in their 1965 article have held up over the decades, though with some adjustments.¹⁵⁰ The dating of the text to its publication during the early years of Justin II's reign has provided scholars with ample room to attempt identifications of a number of the poets Agathias gathered among "those recent and contemporary epigrams," as he writes in the preface of his *Histories*.¹⁵¹ The *Cycle* preface mentions an emperor in praise of whom Agathias says it is always propitious to begin a literary work in praise of, but whether this is to be understood as Justinian or Justin remains a point of debate, although Alan and Averil Cameron's argument for the age of Agathias at the time supports this association with Justin II. War and victory

¹⁴⁸The construction of the Sophiae palace also provides some clues, Averil Cameron, "Notes on the Sophiae, the Sophianae and the Harbour of Sophia," *Byzantion* 37 (1967).

¹⁴⁹Agathias's preface to poem 4.3, *The Greek Anthology vol. I*, trans. W.R. Paton, (London: William Heinemann, 1920): 119-20.

¹⁵⁰Averil Cameron and Alan Cameron discuss how this propagandistic poem reflects the triumphant theme of the preface to the *Cycle*, "Anth. Plan. 72: a Propaganda Poem from the Reign of Justin II," *The Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies University of London*, no. 13 (1966): 101-104.

¹⁵¹For dating of the *Cycle* and Agathias's contribution to the Greek Anthology, Alan Cameron, *The Greek Anthology: from Meleager to Planudes* (New York: Clarendon Press, 1993): 19-49.

appear in the preface to be the themes Agathias adopted for praising Justin, although the exaggerations he expresses are more appropriate for Justinian; if it is the case that Justin is the target of this praise, then like Corippus, Agathias does not refrain from repeating official rhetoric.

The official rhetoric of the first consulship in 566 was likely a response to the rapid and brutal agenda of the regime in the first year of assuming power. The fourth book's defensive tone arose from early political crises affecting the regime, and one must read in between the lines in order to detect how the administration approached these tests of its authority.¹⁵² Two early political actions of Justin and Sophia are the execution of the conspiratorial senators Aitherios and Addaios, and the murder of Justin II's cousin Justin the son of Germanus in 566. The reception of these deeds in the source material shows some initial crises of divisions in the imperial hierarchy. Corippus possibly alludes to these in lines 1.60-61: "Whoever will be envious of your hall, he will fall by his own means and the sword of the law will deal with the unjust men."¹⁵³ The triumphant phrasing is similar to another assassination plot under the previous administration, which Paul Silentiary addresses in the *Description* by claiming that "to take up arms against the emperor is to oppose God (line 55)".¹⁵⁴

The news of the plot against Justin II and his murder of the rival Justin is treated in two single sentences in the chronicle of John of Biclaro, but particular cruelty on the part of Justin is emphasized by his actions in executing the conspirators; Sophia, who is not mentioned in the prior sentence, is the main actor in the second sentence, where Justin the son of Germanus, a

¹⁵²Book four has a "defensive air" as Averil Cameron commented, "The Early Religious Policy of Justin II," 55; for the early consulship of Justin II, Groh, *Geschichte des oströmischen Kaisers Justin II*, 52-54.

¹⁵³*quisquis erit vestrae per se cadet, invidus aulae, adficietque viros legum pius ensis iniquos.*

¹⁵⁴Paul Silentiary describes the conspiracy "The plot was set...the sword made ready" in the iambic preface (lines 25-29) of the *Description of Hagia Sophia*; for the treatment of the conspiracy of Ablabius, Marcellus and Sergius in Paul Silentiary, Mary Whitby, "The Occasion of Paul the Silentiary's Ekphrasis of S. Sophia," *The Classical Quarterly* 35, no. 1 (1985): 220-21; for the comparison with Corippus, Serge Antés, introduction to *Éloge de l'empereur Justin II Corippe*, xviii.

cousin of Justin II, apparently dies because of the action (*factio*) of Sophia.¹⁵⁵ Justin was a popular figure and a decorated general, who was closer to Justinian than perhaps Justin II was himself.¹⁵⁶ One strategy for legitimizing authority was to emphasize Justin II's connection to Justinian, and this is possibly one reason for the contrast between the cool reception of Justinian in the first three books of the *In laudem* and the way Corippus stresses the role of the prior regime in book four. Corippus inserts in the mouth of Justinian a speech at 4.335 as if in defense of Justin's legitimate execution of the plotters. As if from nowhere Justinian declares that it is God who has given Roman *imperium* to Justin, and he advises him to listen to what he had experienced as emperor.

Sophia was in particular the object of much suspicion on the part of contemporary authors, not least because of her confessional transition from a position of miaphysite to a strict Chalcedonian dyophysite leaning, but also on account of her much criticized role in the political mechanizations that put Justin II in power in the first place and later secured her own position through the period of Tiberius's role as Caesar.¹⁵⁷ Sophia, as soon as she appears from the very first years of the reign of Justin II, took a central role in the new imperial ideology. As John of Ephesus has it, she claimed that "the kingdom came through me."¹⁵⁸ As the niece of Theodora her marriage to Justin was a powerful dynastic link that could ensure success for herself and Justin.¹⁵⁹ Her role throughout the *In laudem* becomes far more visible in the fourth book, where Corippus takes advantage of some poetic license to connect the church of Hagia

¹⁵⁵Justin ordered that because they had intended to poison him through drugs ingested orally, both should be cruelly executed, the first by swallowing a sword and the other by ingesting fire; *Prior a feris devoratus secundus incendio concrematus interiit*, *Chronica Minora* vol. II, ed. Theodorus Mommsen (Berlin: MGH, 1894): 211.

¹⁵⁶Evagrius Scholasticus *Ecclesiastical History* 5.3-5; Averil Cameron, *In laudem Iustini Augusti minoris*, 126.

¹⁵⁷For her background, chapter seven of John of Ephesus, *The Third Part of the Ecclesiastical History of John, Bishop of Ephesus*, trans. R. P. Smith, 178-180; Cf. Lynda, Garland, "Chapter 2: Sophia," In *Byzantine Empresses: Women and Power in Byzantium, AD 527-1204* (London: Routledge, 1999): 40-57.

¹⁵⁸ John of Ephesus, *The third part of the Ecclesiastical History*, trans. J. P. Smith, 171.

¹⁵⁹His marriage provided close access to the palace and the position of Cura Palatii, cf. Averil Cameron, "The Empress Sophia," *Byzantion* 45 (1975): 6.

Sophia with the empress's name.¹⁶⁰ She participates in the events leading up to the coronation and is even present in the night with Justin when he received the news of Justinian's death from the senatorial party. When Justin prays in the Church of the Archangels, she prays in the Church of the Theotokos (ibid. 2.46-69); the purpose of this prayer describing the Theotokos and the two natures of Christ may well be to emphasize Sophia's strict Chalcedonian views in opposition to any doubt of her faithful conversion.

Justin and Sophia are an inseparable pair to whom the empire had been promised; the doubling of the name in the phrase *regnum Iustino Sophiaeque piis* is repeated throughout images from the time of the early reign.¹⁶¹ The *Patria* of Constantinople preserves this memory of cooperation between the imperial couple as it is repeatedly Justin II and Sophia who are credited with constructing churches, palaces and other public works in Constantinople.¹⁶² They did not pursue the stratagem of Justinian and Theodora, who worked to appease both sides of the Chalcedonian and Monophysite divide. The regime rather adopted through coinage and other more public works a policy of Chalcedonian orthodox union as a tool for demonstrating the power changes in Constantinople, and exporting the new imperial orthodoxy to the provinces of the empire, and beyond. Corippus records the distinctive appreciation of the imperial couple for images of Justinian at the funeral of the dead emperor, where "Justinian was depicted everywhere and his image was pleasing to their highnesses (3.112-13)."¹⁶³ It is

¹⁶⁰ *Sanxerat Augustus Sophiae cognomine templum, Romanum princeps cum Iustinianus haberet imperium (In laudem 4.264).*

¹⁶¹ Compare also *Augustis vitam laetis clamoribus optant (In laudem 2.75)*; there is a panegyric *topos* for emphasizing the role of imperial consorts; e.g. although Theodora had died by the time Paul Silentiary wrote the *Description of Hagia Sophia*, he still mentions how even in death the all-wise and fortunate empress has intercession with God "Whom as a pious helper you will have after she has departed" (*Description* 63).

¹⁶² For the construction of the Sophiae palace briefly mentioned in the *Patria*, cf. 3.164, *The Patria*, trans. Albrecht Berger (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Library, 2013): 207.

¹⁶³ Images of Justinian were widespread, even in unexpected places such as the possible resemblance of a roundel of King David with Justinian found in the imperial foundation of the Monastery of Mt. Sinai, Andreas Andreopoulos, *Metamorphosis; the Transfiguration in Byzantine Theology and Iconography* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2005): 12; compare also the inscription on the Church of SS. Sergius and Bacchus in Constantinople as an example of the propaganda of the imperial couple, A. Milligen, *Byzantine Churches In Constantinople: Their History And Architecture* (London: Macmillan and Co, 1912): 62-84.

not a stretch to connect this appreciation with the dissemination of images of the new imperial couple throughout the empire; indeed, the poem by Dioscorus of Aphroditto in praise of Justin II is a powerful witness for demonstrating how quickly the regime moved to legitimize its authority: Leslie MacCoull in her edition and translation remarked that the inspiration for this poem may have been the appearance of an imperial image of the emperor at the regional capital of the Thebiad. Lastly, the coinage depicting Sophia and Justin II was the first instance of a double portrait of Emperor and Empress in official Roman coinage, and the image was imitated in regional mints throughout the eastern Mediterranean.¹⁶⁴

Corippus sets the scene for the recitation of Justin II's promulgation of an orthodoxy of three persons, one triune person out of three, and Christ coming of his own will, one person in two natures. In the following I lay out the correspondence of this text with that of Mary Whitby's English translation of Evagrius Scholasticus's *Ecclesiastical History*, but due to the limitations of this thesis I can only provide a cursory comparison between the two texts by way of the emboldened text:

¹⁶⁴Tasha Vorderstrasse, "Coinage of Justin II and its Imitators; Historical, Papyrological, Numismatic and Archeological Sources," *Anatolica* 35 (2009): 15-36; it is worth noting the existence of a Carthage imprint coin of Justin II with helmeted and cuirass-wearing facing bust holding a shielded monogram, Warwick Wroth, *Catalogue of the Imperial Coins in the British Museum: in two volumes*, Vol. 1. (London: British Museum, 1908): 97-102.

<i>In laudem</i> 4.291-311	<i>Ecclesiastical History</i> 5.4 (199-200) ¹⁶⁵
<p>...Deus praesens simul omnia conplens. Internis oculis illic pia cernitur esse indivisa manens patris genitique potestas spiritus et sanctus. Substantia creditur una, tres sunt personae, subsistunt¹⁶⁶ tria nomina fulgent. Utque pater deus est, genitus deus aequus honore, Spiritus et sanctus pariter deus. Ex tribus una, e caelo veniens mundi persona redemptrix, humani generis formam de virgine sumpsit. Sponte sua venit, factorque et conditor orbis factus homo est, verusque deus non destitit esse. Natus, non factus, plenum de lumine lumen, una in naturis extrans persona duabus. consimilis¹⁶⁷ deitate patris hominique profecto consumilis, sine peccato peccata relaxans, plurima per populum faciens miracula Christus. Calcavit mortem moriens, vitamque resurgens vita dedit cunctis in se credentibus. Ipse in caelum ascendens a dextris sedit honore aequaevi patris, iudex venturus in orbem et regnum sine fine tenens.</p>	<p>Ὁμολογοῦμεν δὲ αὐτὸν τὸν μονογενῆ υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ τὸν θεὸν Λόγον τὸν πρὸ αἰώνων καὶ ἀχρόνως ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς γεννηθέντα, οὐ ποιηθέντα, ἐπ’ ἐσχάτων δὲ τῶν ἡμερῶν δι’ ἡμᾶς καὶ διὰ τὴν ἡμετέραν σωτηρίαν κατελθόντα ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν, καὶ σαρκωθέντα ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου καὶ τῆς δεσποίνης ἡμῶν τῆς ἁγίας ἐνδόξου θεοτόκου καὶ ἀεὶ παρθένου Μαρίας, καὶ γεννηθέντα ἐξ αὐτῆς, ὃς ἐστὶν ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς ὁ εἷς τῆς ἁγίας τριάδος, συνδοξαζόμενος τῷ πατρὶ καὶ τῷ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι. Οὐδὲ γὰρ τετάρτου προσώπου προσθήκην ἐπεδέξατο ἡ ἁγία τριάς, καὶ σαρκωθέντος τοῦ ἐνὸς τῆς ἁγίας τριάδος θεοῦ Λόγου· ἀλλ’ ἐστὶν εἷς καὶ ὁ αὐτὸς κύριος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, ὁμοούσιος τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρὶ κατὰ τὴν θεότητα, καὶ ὁμοούσιος ἡμῖν ὁ αὐτὸς κατὰ τὴν ἀνθρωπότητα, παθητὸς σαρκὶ καὶ ἀπαθὴς ὁ αὐτὸς ἐν θεότητι. Οὐ γὰρ ἄλλον τὸν θεὸν Λόγον τὸν θαυματουργήσαντα, καὶ ἄλλον τὸν παθόντα ἐπιστάμεθα· ἀλλ’ ἓνα καὶ τὸν αὐτὸν ὁμολογοῦμεν κύριον ἡμερῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν τὸν τοῦ θεοῦ Λόγον, σαρκωθέντα καὶ τελείως ἐνανθρωπήσαντα, καὶ ἐνὸς καὶ τοῦ αὐτοῦ τὰ τε θαύματα καὶ τὰ πάθη ἅπερ ἐκουσίως ὑπέμεινεν σαρκὶ διὰ τὴν ἡμετέραν σωτηρίαν. Οὐ γὰρ ἄνθρωπος τις ἑαυτὸν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν δέδωκεν, ἀλλ’ αὐτὸς ὁ θεὸς Λόγος ἀτρέπτως γενόμενος ἄνθρωπος, τό τε ἐκούσιον πάθος καὶ τὸν θάνατον ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν σαρκὶ κατεδέξατο.</p>

¹⁶⁵This portion of the text corresponds with Justinian’s *On the Correct Faith*, cf. Eduard Schwartz, ed., *Drei dogmatische Schriften Iustini*, 72-78.

¹⁶⁶Serge Antès has *Subsistunt* and argues that Mommsen’s *subsistite* “est fantaisiste” and that Petschenig’s *sub quis tria*, which Averil Cameron adopts, does not correspond to the paleographic evidence, cf. Serge Antès, *Éloge de l’empereur Justin II*, 85, n. 1.

¹⁶⁷Serge Antès remarks that while *consubstantialis* is the normal translation of ὁμοούσιος, the synonymous meaning may be derived from Philip. 2:7 “in similitudinem hominum factus”, Serge Antès, *Éloge de l’empereur Justin II*, 85, n. 2.

God is present filling up everything. The pious and ever undivided power of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost is discerned there by the inner eyes:¹⁶⁸ **The substance is believed to be one, three are the personae, three names shine forth in a substantial way.** Both the Father is God and the Son God in equal honor and the Holy Ghost is equally God. **One person out of three coming from Heaven as redeemer of the world assumed the form of a human being by a virgin.** He came of his own will, maker and creator of the Earth, was made human, and yet does not cease to be the true God. Born, not made, light full of light, **one person existing in two natures, in like manner to the divinity of the Father,** and perfectly in like manner in his humanity, **not having sinned himself he forgives sins, Christ causes many miracles among the people.** By dying he trampled over death, and by resurrecting in life he gave life to all who believe in him. Rising up into heaven he sits on the right hand of the father in equal honor to him, he will come again to be a judge on Earth and keep his kingdom without end.

“We confess Him as the Only-begotten Son of God, God the Word, who before the ages and outside time was begotten of the Father, not created, but at the end of days **for us and for our salvation came down [199] from the heavens,** and was made flesh of the Holy Spirit, and of our Lady, the holy, glorious, Mother of God and ever-Virgin Mary, and was begotten from her, He who is our Lord Jesus Christ, **who is one of the holy Trinity, co-honoured with the Father and the Holy Spirit.** For the Holy Trinity did not accept an addition of a fourth person, even when God the Word, one of the Holy Trinity, was made flesh; but He is one and the same, our Lord Jesus Christ, **consubstantial** with God and the Father in respect of divinity, and the same **consobstantial** with us in respect of humanity, the **same capable of suffering in flesh and incapable of suffering in divinity.** For we do not acknowledge that God the Word, **who performed miracles,** is different from the one who suffered; but we confess as one and the same our Lord Jesus Christ, the Word of God, who was made flesh and became fully man, and that of one and the same being are the miracles and the sufferings, **which he voluntarily endured** in the flesh for the sake of our salvation. For it was not some man who gave himself on our behalf, but God the Word Himself who, without change, became man and accepted in the flesh the voluntary suffering and death on our behalf.”¹⁶⁹

The likely source for Corippus’s oddly placed Christological passage was some version of the much lengthier text cited by Evagrius Scholasticus. The strict Chalcedonian formulae presented in both Corippus’s and Evagrius’s texts refute the compromise made by Justinian in 565 of apthartodocetism, or the non-suffering of Christ’s human nature (e.g. “same capable of suffering in flesh and incapable of suffering in divinity”). The nearly parallel ordering of phrases also lends some credence to the hypothesis of the influence of Justin’s Creed. Yet, one particular difference should be observed: while the Creed as transmitted by Evagrius shows

¹⁶⁸The Trinity is worshiped *illic* “there,” i.e. in Hagia Sophia.

¹⁶⁹Evagrius Scholasticus, *The Ecclesiastical History*, trans. Michael Whitby (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000): 259-260.

a careful balance between a return to Chalcedonian orthodoxy and the preservation of the fundamental Christological doctrine of the Fifth Ecumenical Council, Corippus's text shows the first tendency and displays almost nothing of the second. The only formula reminiscent of Neochalcedonism: "one person out of three coming from Heaven" is highly ambiguous. This formulation had been refuted as Nestorian by Joannes Maxentius in his *Dialogus cum Nestorianos*.¹⁷⁰ All this seems to point to Corippus's fidelity to the North African dyophysite theological tradition.

Part Two Justin II and his Western Reception

Whether or not the *In laudem* was successfully received at court may be answered to some extent by its survival, because it was likely no accident that the poem of a North African, performed in Constantinople, ended up in a Visigoth MS. In my introduction I have already discussed how the sole surviving complete MS of the *In laudem*, Matritensis 10029, is today found in the Biblioteca Nacional de España, most likely originating from the city of Toledo. The mystery of its Visigoth transmission opens up the reasoning for how this text left Constantinople via two possible routes. Michael Ruiz Azagra in his 1581 edition had at his disposal both the MS Matritensis and possibly Frankish parallel texts, but these versions of the text have yet to resurface.¹⁷¹ The location of these possible MSS and the existence of the Matritensis 10029 have led a few scholars to speculate on the possibility of near contemporaneous transmission of the texts in two possible instances.

The first route of transmission by the Frankish kingdom has been the topic of significant research. Outside of the Roman Empire, the regime was eager to exercise influence over the

¹⁷⁰ John Maxentius, *Dialog. c. nestor.*, II. 21, ACO IV. 2, 41, 23-25: "Nihil, quod tibi obiciam, occurrit ulterius, nisi, quia non unum ex trinitate, sed, unam personam christum ex trinitate, melius arbitror confiteri, praecipue quia tres personae sunt trinitatis," István Perczel, "Une théologie de la lumière : Denys l'Aréopagite et Evagre le Pontique," in: *Revue des Etudes Augustiniennes* 45, no. 1 (1999): 79-120, esp. 103.

¹⁷¹ Dieter Schaller, "Frühkarolingische Corippus-Rezeption," *Wiener Studien* 105 (1992), 172-187.

allied Frankish kingdom. Roman interest at the time in the Franks can be corroborated with the attention that Agathias devoted to the history of the Franks (cf. *Histories* 1.6 where Agathias discussed the Frankish dynasty).¹⁷² The Franks were one of the few Germanic peoples to adopt Chalcedonian catholic doctrine at the time, although their proximity to Rome put their bishops at odds with Constantinople during the time of the Three Chapters Controversy in a similar manner as the North African bishops.¹⁷³ The situation changed with the ascension of Justin II to the throne. The praise offered by Corippus and other Latin sources in the early years was matched by an important episode in the history of late Roman and Frankish interactions: the donation of the true cross relic by Justin II and Sophia to Sigibert the king of the Franks at the request of Radegund, the abbess at Poitiers. The negotiations for this object possibly occurred as Gregory of Tours recorded when not long after the death of Justinian, King Sigibert sought a treaty of peace from the new emperor Justin II and his party of ambassadors traveled by ship to Constantinople, where they acquired what demands they had made.¹⁷⁴ All of this happened over the course of a year after which they returned to Gaul before the time when the cities of Antioch and Apamea were captured by the Persians.¹⁷⁵

The account of this transfer is preserved in several dedications by the Frankish poet Venantius Fortunatus. Fortunatus, who was born around 530 and possibly grew up in Treviso, left war-torn northern Italy for the lands of the Franks in Gaul around 566 at the time of the transition from Justinian to Justin II. When Fortunatus reached Poitiers around 567-568, the nun Radegund was overseeing the transfer of the relic; Fortunatus composed the hymns *Vexilla*

¹⁷²E.g. in the *Histories* 1.6, where Agathias provides an ethnography of the Franks, whom he contrasts in *Histories* 2.1 with the primitive beliefs of the pagan Alamani.

¹⁷³Ian Wood, "The Franks and Papal Theology 550-660," in *Crisis in the Oikoumene* (Belgium: Brepolis, 2007): 223-242.

¹⁷⁴*Locutique tamen cum imperatore quae petierant obtinuerunt*, 4.40, *Gegorii Turonensis opera, Libri historiarum X* (Hanover: MGH, 1951): 172-3.

¹⁷⁵Averil Cameron, "The early religious policies of Justin II," in *The Orthodox Churches and the West*, ed. Derek Baker (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1976): 58-62.

egis prodeunt and *Pange lingua* in honor of its reception.¹⁷⁶ The poetic work that is relevant to the study of Corippus, however, is the *Carmen ad Iustinum Sophiamque Augustos*, which contains a repeated refrain to “Justin ruler on Earth” (*Carmen* 12, 22, 50), and dedications to “lofty Sophia who keeps the imperial step” (ibid. 62) and then to Radegund (ibid. 96). The first ten lines are relevant for a strikingly similar passage on the Trinity as with Corippus:

<p>The highest glory of the ancient Father and the nourishing Spirit, God who must be worshiped as one in the Trinity. The majesty, the threefold person, the single substance, equally unified and of like age to each other. One virtue remaining ever the same, one power in three, whatever the Father is capable to do, the Son, and the Holy Spirit is able to do the same. Indeed, distinct in its personae, it is joined together by strength, by one nature, equal in might, in light, in rule. The Trinity has always been together, ruling intemporally, needing nothing to be served with, nor capable to acquire more. The highest glory to you, the sower and redeemer of the universe, you who being just grant Justin to be the lord of the world. (<i>Carmen ad Iustinum Sophiamque Augustos</i> 2.1-10)</p>	<p>Gloria summa patris antiqui ac spiritus almi, Unus adorandus hac trinitate deus,¹⁷⁷ Maiestas, persona triplex, substantia simplex,¹⁷⁸ Aequalis consors atque coaeva sibi, Virtus una manens idem, tribus una potestas (quae pater haec genitum spiritus ipsa potest), Personis distincta quidem, coniuncta vigore, Naturae unius, par ope luce throno, Secum semper erat trinitas, sine tempore regnans, Nullius usus egens nec capiendo capax. Gloria summa tibi, rerum sator atque redemptor, Quidas Iustinum iustus in orbe caput.</p>
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The direct correspondence between this text and Corippus appears emboldened above. The *persona triplex substantia simplex* may derive from Corippus’s rephrasing of *substantia tria creditur una, tres sunt personae*. *Aequalis consors atque coaeva sibi* is similar to the doubling of *consimilis* in lines 303 and 304. *Tribus una potestas* in Fortunatus is similar to Corippus’s Trinitarian language overall, and scholars have remarked on the importance of

¹⁷⁶Brian Brennan, “The Career of Venantius Fortunatus,” *Traditio* 41 (1985): 61-62.

¹⁷⁷Compare with the phrasing earlier in the poem of *deus est tota virtute colendus, semper adorandus, semper metuendus, amandus* (*In laudem* 2.209-10).

¹⁷⁸For a possible later connection of this phrase there is a poem *Andreae de Maria uirgine* (766) in the *Latin Anthology*, containing the lines *triplicitas simplex simplicitasque triplex*, cf. *Anthologia Latina sive poesis latinae supplementum, pars prior*, eds. Francis Buecheler and Alexander Riese (Leipzig: Teubner, 1869): 231.

Trinitarian dogma to Fortunatus's hymns. *Secum semper erat trinitas, sine tempore regnans* repeats as well the *regnum sine fine tenens* of Corippus. Finally *redemptor* in this short extract is similar to the function of the *trinitas e caelo veniens mundi persona redemptrix* in Corippus. A more extensive analysis, which is beyond the scope of this thesis, of the relationship between the passage in the *In laudem* and the whole text of Fortunatus would demonstrate even more affinities, which given the historical background may likely prove not to be accidental. A further testament to the connection between Fortunatus Venantius and Corippus is the fact that the MS Matritensis 10029 also contains an extract of Fortunatus (his *Epistle to King Chilperic I* on fol. 135r).¹⁷⁹ The sequence of dating would also line up appropriately, although Cameron cautioned against connecting the two works directly.¹⁸⁰

A second route of transmission may be speculated in John of Biclaro the continuator of Victor of Tunnuna, who wrote during the reign of Leovigild (r. 568-586).¹⁸¹ John of Biclaro records for the years of Justin's Early reign that he "destroyed what was contrary to the council of Chalcedon."¹⁸² The initially optimistic reception of Justin II contrasts with the remarks by Gregory of Tours, and Paul the Deacon who followed Gregory, that Justin was given to complete avarice, a reviler of the poor and despoiler of the rich. Gregory and Paul the Deacon after him might in turn have derived this sentiment from the dissatisfied court officials in Constantinople.¹⁸³ The difference in reception between these two chronicle traditions improves

¹⁷⁹Vendrelli Peñaranda, "Estudio del Codice de Azagra, Biblioteca Nacional de Madrid MS 10029," *Revista de Archivos Bibliotecas y Museos* 82 (1979): 655-705.

¹⁸⁰The poem was likely composed after 567 when Fortunatus reached Poitiers, Averil Cameron, "The early religious policies of Justin II," 56-58.

¹⁸¹Serge Antès, introduction to *Eloge de l'empereur Justin II*, lxxxvi-lxxxviii.

¹⁸²567, 2. *Romanorum LIII Regnavit Iustinus iunior annis XI. Qui Iustinus anno primo regni sui ea quae contra synodum Calchedonensem fuerant commentata, destruxit symbolumque sanctorum CL patrum Constantinopoli congregatorum et in synodo Calchedonensi laudability receptum in omni catholica ecclesia a populo concinendum intromisit priusquam dominica dicatur oratio*, Iohannis Biclariis, MGH, 211.

¹⁸³Gregory of Tours in the *History of the Franks*, 4.40 "Justin a man of many vices"; paralleled in Paul the Deacon's description of Justin as "a man given to complete avarice," *History of the Lombards* 3.11.

the hypothesis of a possible reception by John of Biclaro, who in fact spent his youth in Constantinople before returning to Visigoth Spain.

The conclusion that can be reached by connecting the paraphrase of the Creed of Constantinople in the *In laudem* with Evagrius Scholasticus's more extant version must await further analyses of the relations among the early state entities of the western Mediterranean and their relations with the late Roman Empire at this time. The possibility that such a text could travel the road with either one individual or via an embassy on its way back from Constantinople provides tantalizing evidence for the still fluid world of the late antique Mediterranean, and works against the view a disinterested foreign policy on the part of Constantinople with the western Mediterranean after the reign of Justinian, whereby Justin II and the following regimes pivoted their focus on the eastern front with Persia. Another important question that these routs of transmission help to answer is a question asked in an article by Heinz Hofmann on whether Corippus was a patristic author.¹⁸⁴ The evidence for a positive answer to this debate may be found in the importance of Corippus's testimony for the Creed of Constantinople and its penetration to the Latin West. The transmission as far as it is possible to speculate either by way of the Frankish embassy, or by way of the Visigoths demonstrates the fluidity of the Latin-speaking western Mediterranean and its connectivity with Constantinople. Corippus was a poet between west and east, Latin and Greek, between the world of Late Antiquity and that of the early Medieval, during a time state formation on the borderlands of the late Roman Empire, and at the final apogee of the late empire's Mediterranean-wide power.

¹⁸⁴ Heinz Hofmann, "Corippus as a Patristic Author?" *Vigiliae Christianae* 43, no. 4 (Dec., 1989): 361-377.

Concluding Chapter: The Emperor and his Tower, the Later Years of Justin II

The aims of the thesis have been to comment more extensively on the fusion of political and ecclesiastical aspects of literature at the court of Justin II and Sophia as seen in the *In laudem* and other contemporary sources. I have placed particular emphasis on the interactions of the poet, as far as can be gleaned, with his patrons in the imperial administration, and I have appreciated his work within the late antique environment of its composition. The emphasis on political and ecclesiastical aspects has extended to confessional affairs, which cannot in fact be separated from secular operations of the government in the sixth century, especially in regards to the complex situation in North Africa following the Three Chapters Controversy and the Fifth Ecumenical Council. All the praise of the emperor has provided a somewhat one-sided view of the era; so, in these final pages I shall address in brief the Syriac reception of Justin II's early reign as a counterpoint to Corippus.

How can the re-evaluation of Corippus, as I have proposed in this thesis, add to the discussion of other historical sources from the era of Justin II's power shift? Roger Scott in an important article contextualized the *Secret History* of Procopius with the *Chronicle* of Malalas as a methodology for the studying the reception of imperial rhetoric during the reign of Justinian.¹⁸⁵ Because Malalas likely moved from Antioch to Constantinople later in life, the eighteenth book of his *Chronicle* provides a valuable case study for the effects of the Constantinopolitan context on a source.¹⁸⁶ Scott concluded that Malalas had access like

¹⁸⁵Roger Scott, "Malalas, the Secret History and Justinian's Propaganda," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 39 (1985): 99-109.

¹⁸⁶Malalas, whose name possibly derived from the Syriac *malolo* (ܡܠܠܐ) "endowed with speech", "eloquent", "rhetor", and could have held the title of *scholasticus* (Cf. Agathias Scholasticus et al.), meaning that he held a bureaucratic position first in Antioch and then later in Constantinople, where he completed the last sections of his

Procopius to official imperial rhetoric while dwelling in the capital city toward the end of his life.¹⁸⁷ A similar situation pervades in the *In laudem*, inasmuch as Corippus's interactions with court bureaucrats must have proved advantageous enough to gather intimate knowledge of the goings-on of, in this case, Justin II's court.¹⁸⁸ Another result of the study of Malalas and Procopius shows that rhetoric from its origin can be received in manifold ways; in the case of Procopius's *Secret History* often the same points of praise that Malalas offers for the regime in the typically pro-Justinian book eighteen of the *Chronicle* are turned against the administration.¹⁸⁹ The benefit of such an approach with regards to the source material is that every genre can be used for reconstructing the context, not just the classicizing historians like Agathias, Menander Protector or Theophylact Simmoca, but also church histories, chronicles, hagiography, and panegyric.

The *topos* of the emperor's *vigilantia* or "wakefulness" is repeated throughout the first books of the *In laudem*, and this motif can provide a case study for the double reception of imperial rhetoric. The origins of this *topos* lie in the Roman tradition (e.g. Pliny the Younger's panegyric to the Emperor Trajan) as well as in the common Greek tradition (e.g. the sleep and wakefulness of Achilles in the *Iliad*), where typically in the panegyric texts the concern of the emperor for his subjects prevents him from sleeping.¹⁹⁰ Corippus throughout the *In laudem* praises the emperor both for the sacredness of his sleep (when the Theotokos appears to him) and for the lucidity with which he perceives the developments around him (e.g. when he is informed of Justinian's death). Justin and Sophia remain awake during the middle of the night

Chronicle; for the debate, Brian Croke, "Malalas, the Man and his Work," in *Studies in John Malalas*, eds. E. Jeffreys, B. Croke and R. Scott (Sydney: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 1990): 3-5.

¹⁸⁷On access to court propaganda, Roger Scott, "Malalas, the Secret History and Justinian's Propaganda," 104.

¹⁸⁸This comparison was briefly made in C. Gleye, "Malalas und Corippus," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 4 (1895): 366-400.

¹⁸⁹Roger Scott, "Malalas, the Secret History and Justinian's Propaganda," 101.

¹⁹⁰For examples in classical literature of the sleepless emperor, Cicero *de Oratore* 2.150; for the history of this virtue in the classical tradition and its usage in Corippus, Michael Dewar, "Corippus on the Wakefulness of Poets and Emperors," *Mnemosyne* 46, no. 2 (May, 1993): 219-21.

when the eunuch Calinicus arrives with the senators in the Sophiae Palace (*In laudem* 1.114-115). At the same time Justin II's sleep is imbued with a sacred quality throughout the narrative of the first book as he prepares to assume his place as the successor to his uncle (*In laudem* 1.66-7); Corippus argues that, while ideally the emperor should have been vigilant at the time of Justinian's death, it was rest that revealed a dream from God, in which the Virgin appeared to tell him about things to come (ibid. 1.25-35).

Sleeplessness conversely was also employed in invective texts, and these relied on the same cultural fusion of classical and Christian *topoi*. The lack of sleep was related to demonic possession, or actually being a demon.¹⁹¹ Nikolaos Barkas in a recent monograph on sleep in Byzantium discussed how this time of prayer could also become the time when demons are particularly active, and how fear of demons caused sleeplessness in Christians.¹⁹² In a reversal of this Christian *topos*, there is Procopius's invective distortion of the sleeplessness of Justinian, where rather than a sleepless night spent in prayer, Justinian spends the night wandering the palace in demonic frenzy (*Secret History* 12). The madness of Justin II's later years in John of Ephesus's *Ecclesiastical History* provides a useful counterpoint to the panegyric habit of emphasizing wakefulness. Corippus describes how after the coronation feast the imperial couple could not sleep due to their busy minds, which were occupied with thoughts of future rule (3.135-40).¹⁹³ These remarks can have a double force: for while it is again a typical motif of the Latin panegyrics to praise emperors for their refusal of life's luxuries (cf. the meal following Justinian's funeral *In laudem* 3.85), John of Ephesus like

¹⁹¹For sleep of the emperors an important motif in both panegyric and invective texts, Nikolaos Barkas, *Sleep and Sleeplessness in Byzantium* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press 2016): 199-205.

¹⁹²For the effects of possession by demons on sleep in antiquity, ibid. 112-120.

¹⁹³This is a reflection of a traditional motif that was especially utilized under Justinian the "sleepless sovereign"; for the image of the sleepless emperor (βασιλεὺς ἀκοίμητος), Brian Croke, "Justinian, Theodora, and the Church of Saints Sergius and Bacchus," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 60 (2006): 47-48; on the history of this trope in Late Antiquity, Nikolaos Barkas, *Sleep and Sleeplessness*, 190 and 201.

Procopius in his invective of Justinian, commented on how Justin in his later years of madness could not enjoy rest (*Ecclesiastical History* 3.3).¹⁹⁴

When faced with a text like Corippus's *In laudem* a due amount of skepticism can be counter-balanced with invective sources such as John of Ephesus.¹⁹⁵ A number of cases show that John of Ephesus adopted similar strains of imperial rhetoric in his generally negative portrayal of the regime of Justin II. John of Ephesus became disillusioned with Justin II very early on in his text, claiming that the emperor's impiety and abuse of power led him to madness.¹⁹⁶ Justin's madness causes him irritability and discontent, the frames of the palace windows needed to be barred shut, various amusements were drawn up to keep the emperor occupied and distracted, and among many other maladies the emperor is said to have even bitten one of his guards in agitation.¹⁹⁷ The last story, as John of Ephesus recalled, led to widespread rumors in the capital of Justin II's deteriorated state of madness (*Ecclesiastical History* 3.2). John of Ephesus dismissed even more disturbing accounts as wild rumor, but his proximity to Constantinople and the procedures of the imperial court set him in the midst of a war of propaganda. One telling example of just how excited the capital was in these uncertain years under Justin II is attested by the planting of an epigram or some form of writing (a $\mu\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\tau\eta$ or $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\tau\eta$) by someone of the City ($\tau\omicron\upsilon\tau\omicron\iota\varsigma\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\tau\omicron\iota\varsigma\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\tau\omicron\iota\varsigma$) on a tablet ($\mu\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\tau\eta$), which contained the following verse:

¹⁹⁴L.K. Born, "The Perfect Prince according to the Latin Panegyrists," *AJP* 55 (1934): 28-29.

¹⁹⁵For Cameron's assessment of John of Ephesus as a reliable source, Averil Cameron, "Early Byzantine *Kaiserkritik* Two Case Histories," *BMGS* 3 (1977): 11-13.

¹⁹⁶John of Ephesus likely began his work while in exile on the Prince's Isles following his captivity in the Hospital of Euboulos for refusing to convene under Justin, II's 571 ecclesiastical unification efforts; for the reconstruction of John of Ephesus's biography, *John of Ephesus: a monophysite historian in sixth-century Byzantium* (Dissertation Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, 1995): 21-23.

¹⁹⁷3.3 John of Ephesus, *The Third Part of the Ecclesiastical History of John, Bishop of Ephesus*, trans. R. P. Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1860): 197-8.

“Build, build your pillar, and raise as high as you can; then ascend and stand on top of it, looking out, see and behold to the east, south, north, and west, what is there is wasted away and destroyed in your days.”¹⁹⁸

The folly of Justin II’s building projects is a reversal of the same propagandistic aims of Corippus’s *In laudem* such as the building of the Sophiae Palace in Constantinople, where the poet proclaims: “Both famous places are imitating the exceedingly bright heaven, both are established by the plan of God, the temple well respected and the splendid rooftops of the new Sophia (4.297).” For John of Ephesus the fervent building program of Justin II and Sophia is not a subject of praise but of derision, and a mark of the wasteful squandering by Justin II. Procopius similarly reversed the praise of his invective *Secret History* for the economic policies of Justinian, while in the *Buildings* the subject matter of course warrants his praise for the emperor who “spares no expense (*Buildings* 1.3).”

After the *In laudem* there is no current material from which to surmise where Corippus went next, whether to his beloved Africa, or whether he sojourned on in Constantinople. An argument out of silence would be in favor of the former option, but his story is inextricably linked to the source of his inspiration, Justin II. The emperor characterized by Corippus as clear minded and concerned with thoughts of victorious war and all the qualities an emperor ought to possess, famously ended his days in a growing haze of madness. The final sensible act he could perform was the crowning of Tiberius on February 7th, 574, for which he is recorded to have given a speech so remarkably lucid that, as Evagrius remarks, all were brought to tears.¹⁹⁹ It is John of Ephesus, however, who gives the more lurid account of the gossip in Constantinople; for when an official portrait was commissioned to commemorate the transference of power, John of Ephesus writes that many interpreted that an angel was placed

¹⁹⁸For the very useful page on John of Ephesus by Syri.ac, syri.ac/johnofephesus (accessed April, 2017).

¹⁹⁹The speech is found at 5.12 Evagrius Scholasticus, *The Ecclesiastical History*, trans. Michael Whitby (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000): 272-3.

in the portrait above Justin II because the mad king could otherwise not have uttered such an uncharacteristically reasonable speech.²⁰⁰

The Constantinople where Corippus in 566 or 567 performed part or whole of his *In laudem Iustini Augusti minoris* in four books was a diverse urban space where many languages, cultures, and confessional differences could be observed. Corippus's highly topical poem offers the chance to look into this still very fluid world of Late Antiquity. Corippus is one of the premier examples of an author whose work embodies the exciting and at times risk-filled adventures of a late antique man of letters: his career as an African poet steeped in the tradition of Roman literature, his innovative imitation of generic forms and adaption of panegyric motifs to the tastes of the court in Constantinople, his route from Latin North Africa to multilingual Constantinople and his fusion of the Roman past with the innovations of Christian rhetoric place him at a seminal moment between the end of one era and the beginning of a new.

²⁰⁰3.5, John of Ephesus, *The Third Part of the Ecclesiastical History of John, Bishop of Ephesus*, trans. R. P. Smith, 175-6.

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