

EUSEBIUS PRIZE ESSAY

*Eusebius of Emesa and the
'Continuatio Antiochiensis Eusebii'*

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Richard Burgess, in his Studies in Eusebian and post-Eusebian chronology, argues convincingly for the existence of a hitherto unknown Antiochene continuation of Eusebius' Chronicle. While Burgess does much to advance understanding of fourth-century historiography, his conclusion that this effort derives from a pro-Nicene author is less convincing than his other arguments. Internal evidence in the fragments themselves, and circumstances surrounding the life of the fourth-century bishop Eusebius of Emesa, point to that prelate as the likely author of the source identified by Burgess.

The fourth-century bishop Eusebius of Emesa has drawn increased scholarly attention in recent years. Many have focused on his theology and how his nuanced position defies easy classification within the traditional framework of the 'Arian Controversy'.¹ Although

I would like to thank Warren Treadgold, who guided me to research the 'Lost Arian History' for my dissertation, upon which this article is based. I am also grateful to Damian Smith for his encouraging advice in drafting this article as well as to Richard Burgess whose excellent and meticulous research serves as the obvious and necessary foundation for my observations.

¹ See, for example, Ignace Berten, 'Cyrille de Jérusalem, Eusèbe d'Émèse et la théologie semi-arienne', *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* lii (1968), 38–75; R. P. C. Hanson, *The search for the Christian doctrine of God: the Arian controversy*, 318–381, Edinburgh 1988, 387–98; Maurice Wiles, 'The theology of Eusebius of Emesa', *Studia Patristica* xix (1989), 267–80; Joseph R. Lienhard, *Contra Marcellum: Marcellus of Ancyra and fourth-century theology*, Washington, DC 1999, 186–97; and Robert E. Winn, *Eusebius of Emesa: Church and theology in the mid-fourth century*, Washington, DC 2011.

Eusebius was described as a ‘standard bearer of Arianism’ by St Jerome, the bishop’s extant sermons seem to offer little to modern historians or theologians that would justify such a title.² Indeed, as several studies have illustrated, Eusebius kept an apparent distance from the stereotypical sides often associated with this Christological controversy.³ Other scholars assess his known writings in the light of subsequent developments and are keen to understand his role in the later development of the so-called Antiochene tradition.⁴ Such studies have helped to illuminate this obscure, yet important, figure. Recent evidence further suggests another aspect to the bishop’s life and writings. The seemingly unrelated endeavours of Richard Burgess to reconstruct a lost fourth-century chronicle may identify a previously unknown work of this prelate and reveal more fully the role of Eusebius in his own time and his legacy for historians.

The brief surviving biographical material relating to Eusebius of Emesa can be found chiefly in the fifth-century *Ecclesiastical histories* of Socrates and Sozomen, both of whom drew upon an encomium written by Eusebius’ fellow-bishop, George of Laodicea.⁵ Eusebius came from a noble family in Edessa and received his religious education from Eusebius of Caesarea. His growing reputation for sanctity included the performance of miraculous works, and he eventually received the episcopal rank in 341. Eusebius of Nicomedia, who performed the consecration, entreated the new bishop to accept the see of Alexandria, but he declined, thinking correctly that the people would resent any bishop other than Athanasius. Ultimately, the new prelate received as his charge the Syrian city of Emesa (modern Homs). His efforts and even residence in his see, however, came to an end because of the people’s suspicions regarding his study of the stars and alleged Sabellianism.⁶ He retreated to Antioch, where he enjoyed the favour of Constantius II and participated in at least one of the emperor’s military campaigns against the Persians. Eusebius

² ‘Eusebius Emisenus Arrianae signifer factionis’: Jerome, *Hieronymi Chronicon*, ed. Rudolf Helm, Berlin 1956 (236i).

³ It can be argued that Eusebius’ self-descriptions reflect his rhetoric rather than his genuine character. Such a ‘hermeneutic of suspicion’ may raise valid objections to the straightforward acceptance of his claims, but the questions this raises – for example how he may have gained from this posture, or what he sought to accomplish – lie beyond the scope of this paper. The fact that concerns us here is Eusebius’ consistent desire to portray himself in his preaching and other writings as a non-confrontational figure.

⁴ For a detailed discussion of the historiography related to this question see R. B. Ter Haar Romeny, *A Syrian in Greek dress: the use of Greek, Hebrew, and Syriac biblical texts in Eusebius of Emesa’s commentary on Genesis*, Louvain 1997, 89–139.

⁵ Socrates, *Kirchengeschichte* ii.9, ed. Günther Christian Hansen, Berlin 1995; Sozomen, *Kirchengeschichte* iii.6, ed. Günther Christian Hansen, Turnhout 2004.

⁶ Sozomen, *HE* iii.6. Given the frequent use of Sabellianism as a polemical device during this period it seems likely that this accusation was unfounded.

died and was buried in the environs of Antioch in the 350s.⁷ To judge from a concise biographical note in Jerome's *De viris illustribus*, he wrote prolifically – including commentaries on various books of sacred Scripture – and his preaching was admired and imitated by many.⁸

Unfortunately, little of this corpus remains extant, but what has survived gives an image of a man who desired to remain aloof from the contemporary turmoil within the Christian Church.⁹ Eusebius' surviving sermons provide a wealth of instances in which the bishop was careful to distinguish himself from the various sides of the 'Arian' controversy. Rather than explicitly denouncing Nicaea, he called for unity among the different Christian parties.¹⁰

Several examples will suffice to give a general picture of Eusebius as one who avoided party polemics and proffered a potential solution to the divisions.¹¹ Once, while preaching, he conveyed succinctly his programme for a purely scriptural articulation of Christology – a position at variance with both Athanasius' stance and the predominant homoeousian position.¹² Eusebius none the less carefully refrained from openly blaming specific individuals even when he addressed the controversy: in one sermon he demonstrated a generally negative attitude towards all the curious who exceeded the bounds of sacred Scripture when discussing

⁷ Jerome, *De viris illustribus* xci, ed. Aldo Ceresa-Gastaldo, Florence 1988. For two theories about the year of his death see E. M. Buytaert, 'L'Heritage littéraire d'Eusèbe d'Émèse', Louvain 1949, 94, and David Woods, 'Ammianus Marcellinus and Eusebius of Emesa', *JTS* liv (2003), 585–91. The first suggests early 359 as a date of death since there are records of a different bishop of Emesa later that year; Woods places Eusebius' death at the hands of Gallus among the events leading up to Caesar's own execution in 354. His conclusion deserves serious consideration, though its findings ultimately do not affect the argument of this paper.

⁸ Jerome, *De viris* xci; see cxix for his mention of one such emulator, Diodorus of Antioch.

⁹ For an important study on the surviving corpus of Eusebian literature see Buytaert, 'L'Heritage littéraire'. Robert Winn offers a recent discussion of Eusebius' works and the studies that have identified them: *Eusebius of Emesa*, 5–13.

¹⁰ Robert Winn, 'The Church of virgins and martyrs: ecclesiastical identity in the sermons of Eusebius of Emesa', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* xi (2003), 316. This was later adapted as a chapter in his recent monograph, *Eusebius of Emesa*, 225–51.

¹¹ David Gwynn discounts the notion of church parties during the fourth century: *The Eusebians: the polemic of Athanasius of Alexandria and the construction of the 'Arian Controversy'*, Oxford 2007. However, T. D. Barnes's review of *The Eusebians* convincingly defends the practice of referring to church parties rooted in theological positions during this era: *JTS* lxiii (2007), 715–18.

¹² 'Unigenitus enim is est, qui solus natus ab uno est. Si est alia interpretatio sermonis, non contendimus. Si enim voluerit aliter interpretari Unigenitum Patris, magis autem audi evangelium quam me, – sine contentione. Noli me audire sed evangelium, quia et ego non mea dico sed de evangelio. Si autem dissentio, quia non ea dico quae evangelium, reliquens me audi eum quem oportet et me audire': Eusebius of Emesa, *De filio* ii.11 (italics mine).

the relationship between the Father and the Son, implicitly criticising the majority of those involved in the debate.¹³ Eusebius also refused to use a clear opportunity in his sermon *Adversus Sabellium* – the Sabellian heresy then being commonly attributed to proponents of Nicaea – to attack specifically the adherents of that council. Instead, he censured all who claimed to know more than Scripture contains, a critique that included many who condemned Athanasius and his theological sympathisers.¹⁴

Eusebius' sermon *De filio*, in particular, presents many moments in which he explicitly rejected the opportunity, or even necessity, of debate. Such a habit of contention, he implied, turned the Church of God into a circus.¹⁵ Although the charity of God was supposed to be our model, he complained, lawsuits and fights had taken root.¹⁶ The bishop then carefully noted the limits of human understanding and distinguished the proper way to express disagreements, all the while emphasising that he would willingly accept fraternal correction in regard to his own theology.¹⁷ This context explains Eusebius' description of himself in another public forum as one who emphatically abstained from contention. The bishop's

¹³ 'Noli dicere quemadmodum, neque quaeras generationem illam, quam nullus enarrat, nullus scit, nullus novit. Crede et confitere infirmitatem tuam ut obumbret te Christus. Si enim quomodo natus es nescis, quemadmodum qui de te ignoras de Patre et Filio aut quaeris aut nosse te putas. Quid ergo? Non debemus confiteri Deum et Filium? Confitere ea quae de Patre et Filio scripta sunt et noli curiosus ea quae non scripta sunt requiere': idem, *De fide* iii.26.

¹⁴ 'Si dixerit Spiritus Sanctus: Generationem eius quis enarravit? noli quaerere neque ab hominibus, neque ab angelis ... Quemadmodum autem Filius ex Patre, cede ei qui novit, ei qui noscitur. Sed tu quaeris, et quis est qui promittat se nosse? Omnis enim quicumque promittit se nosse, mendax est. Pronuntiavit enim Dominus, quod nullus norit nisi solus Pater Filium et Filius Patrem': idem, *Adversus Sabellium* iv.5. In iv.8 he states emphatically that 'Si quid scriptum non est, nequidem dicatur; si quid autem scriptum est, ne deleatur. Non sumus enim auctores, sed discipuli. Non quae volumus, sed ea quae legimus; non ea, quae ex corde, sed ea, quae a Spiritu in scripturis sanctis sunt posita.'

¹⁵ 'Ego enim neque cum contentione dico neque cum lite: ecclesiam Dei non esse circum, scio: non sum illius aut illius, non cum his aut cum illis. Non enim aliter cum patribus ecclesia consuevit: si quis scientiam habet, proferat in medio': idem, *De filio* ii.44.

¹⁶ 'Illic [the relationship between the Father and the Son] caritas, istic lis. Cur lis? Quia scripturis contenti non sumus, sed ex corde non miscenda miscemus': ibid. ii.16.

¹⁷ 'Non sumus enim sapientiores Deo: non ut volumus, sed ut genuit; non ut loquimur, sed ut se habet negotium. Non est enim in nobis, quomodo est Filius, sed in eo qui genuit. Non est nostrum nosse neque enarrare, siquidem *generationem eius quis enarravit*, ut Isaïas in Spiritu dicit. Qui enim contendit, [non] audit; qui autem suscipit, concedit solum Patrem nosse': ibid. ii.12. Regarding his professed willingness to bear correction see ii.32: 'Meus amicus est omnis qui increpat recte; et ego beneficium dantem ascribo omnem qui causatur bene, [non] propter contentionem scilicet; et si ego erro, suscipio tamen alacritatem eius, qui reprehendit.' For other examples, both of his willingness to bear correction and his desire to avoid party polemics see ii.32–4.

‘Et non contendo!’ manifested his refusal to engage in personal, party-driven polemics even when facing the controversial theological questions of his day.¹⁸

It could be argued that these reflections imply that Eusebius of Emesa embraced the homoean theology associated with Acacius of Caesarea. Acacius’ position, ultimately championed by Constantius shortly before his death in early 361, advocated the restriction of theological discussion solely to Scriptural language – a move that avoided the troublesome ‘essence’ terminology – as the way to resolve the conflict. Since this is what Eusebius himself advocated in his sermons, a link between Acacius (or some other homoean figure) and Eusebius might appear as a possible touchstone for the latter’s Scripture-based Christology. Yet a facile association fails to consider the nuances of Eusebius’ position, which on some points stands closer to Athanasius than to any non-Nicene prelate.¹⁹ Moreover, the homoean position gained predominance only in the years after Eusebius’ death. As Robert Winn has demonstrated, Eusebius enjoyed friendly relations with key figures of the homoeousian persuasion throughout his life.²⁰ That George of Laodicea, a prominent homoeousian and enemy of the homoean Acacius, composed this bishop’s *encomium* further implies that Eusebius was not involved with the nascent homoean party but remained in positive relations with the homoeousian camp, despite his apparent distance on a theological level.²¹

This difference notwithstanding, Eusebius’ respected status among the members of the episcopate throughout his life is obvious. His studies under the learned and famous Eusebius of Caesarea, his being the preferred candidate for the see of Alexandria, and his reputation for miracles no doubt distinguished him. His activity, furthermore, extended beyond spiritual concerns, for his position of respect in the church hierarchy was complemented by his position close to the emperor. As is known from the information preserved by the ecclesiastical historians, Eusebius enjoyed access to the imperial court, presumably at least during the military endeavours that he accompanied. The bishop’s writings could therefore be a valuable source for historians in assessing the developing relationship between Empire and Church. Unfortunately, his precise attitude towards Constantius and the imperial world is, at first glance, impossible to

¹⁸ ‘Non sum contentiosus, sed et abstineo me a contentione. Cum humilitate autem de dubiis volo quaerere ut a fratribus. Nonne veritatem dico, quia virtus non poterat suscipere carnis passionem? Sed ego taceo ... Et non contendo!’: idem, *De arbitrio, voluntate Pauli et Domini Passione* 1.31.

¹⁹ Hanson, *Search*, 389–90.

²⁰ See Winn, *Eusebius of Emesa*, 19–51, esp. pp. 46–50.

²¹ See Hanson, *Search*, 387.

ascertain. The surviving sermons never touch directly upon political concerns or voice a particular posture regarding the Christian emperors.

Until now these particular insights of the bishop had been lost, but the meticulous efforts of Richard Burgess to uncover a lost chronicle from this period allow a reassessment of the matter. Burgess's endeavours advance significantly the work of Joseph Bidez, an early twentieth-century historian who attempted to identify and reassemble a series of fragments from a lost fourth-century 'Arian' history used by the fifth-century hetero-orian historian Philostorgius and other writers.²² The idea that there was an unknown non-Nicene historian from this period predated Bidez, but his particular contribution was the suggestion that the work could be partially reconstructed from multiple sources that betrayed a common, seemingly 'Arian' origin.²³ His reconstructed narrative draws from eight different works spanning several centuries of historiography.²⁴ Similar or identical descriptions or other linguistic clues allowed Bidez to explore the possible connections among them. Due to the text's fragmentary nature, however, it is difficult to state conclusively whether Bidez's particular reconstruction, which begins during the reign of Constantine and ends with the death of Valens in 378, is an accurate reflection of the original chronicle.

²² For the fragments collected by Bidez see Philostorgius, *Kirchengeschichte*, ed. Joseph Bidez and Friedhelm Winkelmann, Berlin 1972, 202–41. Regarding the controversial term 'Arian', I can only add to my debt to Richard Burgess by echoing his disclaimer in his *Studies in Eusebian and post-Eusebian chronology*, Stuttgart 1999, 12–13: 'The name [Arian] was, of course, a pejorative term and used as a very wide brush to tar non-orthodox bishops and clergy of many differing shades of belief with regard to the Trinitarian question. The reader should treat the term "Arian" as the convenient, if inaccurate, shorthand that it is intended to be.'

²³ For earlier works that suggested the presence of a lost 'Arian' history see H. M. Gwatkin, *Studies of Arianism*, 2nd edn, London 1900, 219–24, and Pierre Batiffol, 'Un Historiographie anonyme arien du ive siècle', *Römische Quartalschrift für christliche Altertumskunde und Kirchengeschichte* (1895), 57–98.

²⁴ These include a variety of Byzantine and Syrian authors. The most cited are seven chronicles and the fifth-century *Ecclesiastical history* of Philostorgius. Philostorgius' narrative, along with the continuation of the *Chronicle* of Eusebius written by Jerome shortly before the Council of Constantinople in 381, contains the earliest use of the lost work that Bidez identified. Coupled to this testimony are the *Paschal chronicle* and *The chronicle of Theophanes*. Lastly, Bidez highlights four Syrian chronicles. The early seventh-century work of Jacob of Ephesus survives in an incomplete version yet offers parallels to the accounts contained in the Greek sources above. Sections from another work, the *Chronicon miscellaneum ad annum Domini 724 pertinens*, known alternatively as the *Liber calipharum*, also suggest connections to Bidez's fragments. Sources dating several centuries after these two works also have a place in Bidez's reconstruction: the *Chronicle* of Michael I the Syrian, a twelfth-century Jacobite patriarch of Antioch, whose history spanned the years from the creation until 1195, and the *Chronicle of 1234*, composed around 1240 and containing much of the same material as that provided by Michael the Syrian.

Richard Burgess's *Studies in Eusebian and post-Eusebian chronology* reveals the weaknesses in Bidez's presuppositions and argues convincingly that some of these fragments actually belong to a hitherto unknown Antiochene continuation of the *Chronicle* of Eusebius of Caesarea.²⁵ Burgess maintains, contrary to Bidez, that many of the passages pertaining to the years prior to 350 have their source in this Antiochene document. One of the many achievements of Burgess's study is the reconstruction of the Antiochene chronicle, which he dubs the *Continuatio Antiochiensis Eusebii*. His careful linguistic analysis is persuasive. For example, he notices a striking difference among the excerpts collected by Bidez.²⁶ Until 350 it seems that the unknown author was scrupulous in providing a chronological framework; after that year the dating becomes less precise and reflects more a narrative style than the style of a chronicle.²⁷ In a similar fashion, explicitly non-Nicene attitudes surface predominantly after the year 350.²⁸ Burgess argues that these later fragments reflect a second, 'Arian' narrative source.²⁹ He also asserts that the *Continuatio* did not share the non-Nicene beliefs apparent in the remainder of Bidez's fragments.³⁰ This claim, coupled with his observations regarding the chronicle's frequent emphasis on Antioch and detailed knowledge of the emperor Constantius and secular affairs, helps to shape his conclusion that the chronicle came from the hand of a pro-Nicene layman living in Syria.³¹ Burgess further notes that the source's 'ordinary and sometimes clumsy Greek' suggests that the author had received some education but had not mastered the highest levels of rhetoric, a detail that he believes fits well with his depiction of a layman as the author.³² The following analysis of the evidence suggests otherwise. By revisiting in detail Burgess's assumptions in this regard, it is possible to exploit his findings further and posit a link between this chronicle and Eusebius of Emesa.

The case for Burgess's pro-Nicene layman relies in part upon the epithet 'the chaste' (ὁ ἄγνός) that the chronicle attaches to Leontius, an 'Arian' bishop of Antioch. Leontius had castrated himself to dispel rumours of an illicit relationship with a consecrated virgin.³³ Athanasius, in a polemic, had mentioned this mutilation to humiliate his theological foe; indeed, Burgess highlights the saint's derisive term 'eunuch'

²⁵ Burgess, *Studies*, 111–283.

²⁶ *Ibid.* 122–6.

²⁷ *Ibid.* 122.

²⁸ *Ibid.* 125.

²⁹ *Ibid.* 123–4.

³⁰ *Ibid.* 126.

³¹ *Ibid.* 144–5.

³² *Ibid.* 144.

³³ Socrates, *HE* ii.26; Theodoret, *Kirchengeschichte* ii.19, ed. Leon Parmentier, Berlin 1998.

(ὁ ἄπόκοπος) and seeks to associate it with the word ‘chaste’ used in the Antiochene continuation.³⁴ This argument appears forced when Burgess insinuates that ‘chaste’ could be a ‘sarcastic swipe’ at Leontius.³⁵ He admits that the word ‘gives no real indication’ of the author’s theology but then argues that the term ‘does suggest that he [the author] did not approve of Leontius’.³⁶ This suggestion has no clear foundation in the source itself. The idea that the epithet ‘the chaste’ can be freely read as showing disfavour seems to contradict the value that Christians placed upon sexual purity. A more text-based interpretation suggests that the phrase ‘Leontius the chaste’ was praise, for there is no intrinsic reason to think otherwise.

Nor should one be quick to dismiss the admiration for the same Leontius as an individual who preserved the ‘true faith’ (τῆς ἀληθοῦς πίστεως).³⁷ Burgess avoids this obvious evidence against his theory by minimising the importance of such high acclaim for a visibly non-Nicene figure. However, such words as ‘true faith’ have meaning, especially in a world torn asunder by religious battles over correct terminology. As the theological crisis of the fourth century demonstrates, words—and even single letters—mattered to contemporaries.

Burgess’s assumptions regarding Constantine, who receives favourable treatment at the hands of the continuation’s author, should also be subject to reconsideration. He writes: ‘The positive epithets applied to Constantine strongly suggest that the author was not an Arian, though his acceptance of Gregory of Alexandria and the Arian successors of Eustathius of Antioch shows that he was no radical homoousian either.’³⁸ It is true that at least one Christian historian—the heterousian Philostorgius—did not embrace the memory of Constantine without criticism. In Philostorgius’ fifth-century history of the Church the reader finds a negative view of the emperor who executed members of the imperial family.³⁹ Burgess evidently assumes that many who were against Nicene theology, presumably including those who enjoyed the favour of Constantine’s son Constantius, shared Philostorgius’ hostility. This does not necessarily follow. Burgess provides no further evidence, nor does he discuss the praise for Constantine by Eusebius of Caesarea, whose tendencies towards Arius’ position are well known. Burgess’s observation, meanwhile, that the fragments never use an

³⁴ For the use of the epithet ‘the eunuch’ in this context see, for example, St Athanasius’ *Historia Arianorum*, ed. Werner Portmann, Stuttgart 2006, 4.2, 20.5, 28.1.

³⁵ Burgess, *Studies*, 126.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ *Ibid.* 127 n. 40.

³⁸ *Ibid.* 127.

³⁹ Philostorgius, *HE* ii.4. Constantine is criticised for the execution of his son Crispus and wife Fausta.

epithet for Constantius and mention Constantine frequently is interesting but hardly suggestive of a theological position.⁴⁰

He also stresses the lack of polemics within the chronicle as evidence in favour of a pro-Nicene author. Burgess remarks that the irenic tone of the work suggests a Nicene author, but one who had not adopted an extreme position regarding the theological struggles.⁴¹ By the year 350 the homousian position was reeling from severe setbacks. Council after council had gone against its adherents, the high-profile Athanasius had already suffered exile and would again, and the emperor Constantius, who often resided in Antioch during this period, had embraced a contrary theology. This situation would seem to imply an inauspicious moment at which to write a pro-Nicene chronicle. Hans Brennecke's suggestion that pro-Nicene authors were too beleaguered during this period to compose historical works seems plausible; their efforts would more likely have been directed towards a defence of their theology.⁴² It is not impossible that a pro-Nicene composed the chronicle described by Burgess, but these observations show it to be less likely. Indeed, given Constantius' presence in Antioch, the neutral tone of the *Continuatio* is just as likely to imply confidence in a secure, and presumed triumphant, non-Nicene position.

Finally, Burgess declares that Jerome would never have incorporated a heretical author into his own chronicle given 'Jerome's viciously anti-Arian stance'.⁴³ This observation raises the question of Jerome's relationship to Eusebius of Caesarea, but Burgess attempts to resolve this by stating that the latter's religious beliefs were not obvious in his *Chronicle*.⁴⁴ Yet this same ambiguity confronts the reader of the Antiochene continuation as reconstructed by Burgess. The fact that the modern historian must employ various inferences in order to discern a pro-Nicene theological position reveals that the issue is not as simple as proposed. Burgess's own arguments do not allow him to reject the possibility that Jerome unwittingly, as it were, used an 'Arian' source. In addition, there is reason to suspect that, contrary to Burgess's suggestion, Jerome did not hesitate to use heterodox writings when it suited his purposes.

⁴⁰ Burgess, *Studies*, 126.

⁴¹ *Ibid.* 127.

⁴² Hanns Christof Brennecke, *Studien zur Geschichte der Homöer*, Tübingen 1988, 95. See also B. H. Warmington, 'Did Athanasius write history?', in Christopher Holdsworth and T. P. Wiseman (eds), *The inheritance of historiography. 350-900*, Exeter 1986, 7-16.

⁴³ Brennecke, *Studien*, 127 n. 40. See also Richard Burgess, 'A common source for Jerome, Eutropius, Festus, Ammianus, and the *Epitome de Caesaribus* between 358 and 378, along with further thoughts on the date and nature of the *Kaisergeschichte*', *Classical Philology* c (2005), 173.

⁴⁴ Burgess, *Studies*, 127 n. 40.

The hermit's *De viris illustribus* can serve as an example in this matter. Jerome wrote this work in 392 as a response to a request that he compose a list of famous Christian authors using the genre of illustrious lives.⁴⁵ The introduction tells his audience not only that many Christians have contributed works worthy of note but also that he has worked diligently to list these various treasures within a single volume.⁴⁶ Jerome's design is to refute the pagan contention that Christianity lacked intellectual vigour, and it would seem the ideal forum for the irascible saint to include only those authors whom he admired or with whom he agreed. Yet this is far from the reality, for he includes authors such as Ambrose of Milan, with whom he had strong personal disagreements.⁴⁷ Perhaps more surprising is his addition of men whose beliefs he condemned as heretical. Included among the names that he selected are not only ambiguous figures like Eusebius of Caesarea but also notorious heresiarchs like the heterousian Eunomius.⁴⁸

This observation does not directly refute Burgess's claim that Jerome would never have used an 'Arian source'. It is one thing to list authors and their works, another to incorporate their writings into one's own endeavours. None the less, it does demonstrate that he could curb his 'viciously anti-Arian stance' in order to suit his needs. Jerome apparently felt that the advantage of listing as many Christian intellectuals as possible outweighed the dangers of including men with whose theology he vehemently disagreed.⁴⁹ Since he acted in such a fashion in regard to his *De viris*, the possibility exists that Jerome did likewise when using the *Continuatio Antiochiensis Eusebii*, particularly because Jerome himself noted the haste with which he wrote his own chronicle.⁵⁰ Such speed implies the use of other sources, and Jerome—under a scholar's time constraints—may have accepted more readily a work that assisted his own, especially since sources for the period were presumably not very common. In addition, it follows that Jerome would most likely mention the author of this Antiochene continuation in his *De viris*, since he had used that source in the composition of his own chronicle just a few years

⁴⁵ Jerome, *De viris*, preface. For the date of its composition see J. N. D. Kelly, *Jerome: his life, writings, and controversies*, New York 1975, 174.

⁴⁶ Jerome, *De viris*, preface.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.* ch. cxxiv.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.* chs lxxxii, cxx.

⁴⁹ So obvious was this to contemporaries that Augustine wrote to Jerome complaining that if he felt so pressed to include heretical authors he should at least have mentioned in what ways they erred: *Augustinus-Hieronymus epistulae mutuae*, ed. Alfons Früst, Turnhout 2002, ep. xl.

⁵⁰ Jerome, *Chronicon*, preface. See also Kelly, *Jerome*, 73–5.

earlier.⁵¹ None the less, there is no author mentioned by Jerome who fits the hypothetical character indicated by Burgess: a pro-Nicene, lay Antiochene.⁵²

A figure whom Jerome does include is Eusebius of Emesa. Jerome's own testimony reveals that Eusebius composed works of an historical nature that were popular reading among some.⁵³ Furthermore, Burgess's arguments in favour of a pro-Nicene layman could easily describe the bishop of Emesa. The polemical neutrality, for example, shown by Eusebius of Emesa in his preaching coincides with the non-controversial nature noted by Burgess in the Antiochene chronicle. Eusebius' long sojourns in Antioch would have allowed him to write with familiarity about that city and its events. Furthermore, as an intimate of the emperor, his knowledge of the wider imperial world and military campaigns would naturally be a part of his vision. The praise of Leontius and acceptance of Gregory – who became bishop of Alexandria after Eusebius himself had refused that honour in 341 – also fit well with what is known of the bishop's life.

There are even personal touches that indicate a connection. Certain entries from the chronicle, for example, mention stars in some detail, an apparent interest of the author's that calls to mind the fascination with the heavens exhibited by Eusebius of Emesa.⁵⁴ Nor is this a minor detail: it was this very interest that led to Eusebius' departure from his see. Emesa was known for its solar cult, and, though he as its bishop explicitly condemned astrology in his sermons, Eusebius could not suppress his evident interest in the heavenly bodies and expressed it in his preaching.⁵⁵ This characteristic apparently aroused suspicion in the Christian community of Emesa and led to Eusebius' withdrawal to Antioch. It would not

⁵¹ Two other possibilities remain. Either the work was anonymous or Jerome intentionally excluded its author. (There is evidence that he ignored authors whom he knew but disliked: Kelly, *Jerome*, 149.) Neither possibility can be entirely dismissed, but it seems more likely that he would include at least a cursory mention of an author whose work he had actually read – unlike those authors listed whose works he merely pretended to have read: *ibid.* 176–7.

⁵² 'The *Continuatio* thus provides us with an interesting glimpse into the world view of a reasonably well-off and educated inhabitant of Antioch in the middle of the fourth century, a view unlike that presented in most of our sources, since he was not an emperor, a bishop, or a religious leader, a teacher like Libanius, or a member of the senatorial aristocracy': Burgess, *Studies*, 144–5.

⁵³ 'Eusebius Emisenus, elegantis et rhetorici ingenii innumerabiles et qui ad plausum populi pertineant confecit libros, magisque historiam secutus ab his qui declamare volunt, studiosissime legitur': Jerome, *De viris* xci.

⁵⁴ Compare entries 31 (pp. 168–9) and 9 (pp. 172–3) in Burgess, *Studies*, and Sozomen, *HE* iii.6.

⁵⁵ Winn, *Eusebius of Emesa*, 41–5. Winn (p. 44) even suggests, based on the frequency and manner of use in his sermons, that Eusebius' favourite scriptural passage was 1 Corinthians xv.41, which suggests the practice of stargazing.

be surprising, therefore, if traces of this enthusiasm were reflected in the bishop's other writings, such as the *Continuatio* if it is his.

A specific entry may confirm a connection between Eusebius' stargazing and the content of the *Continuatio*. Fragment 22 of Burgess's reconstruction, derived from Theophanes AM 5826 (AD 333/4), mentions a star, 'smoking greatly as from a furnace' (καπνίζων σφόδρα ὡς ἀπὸ καμίνου), that appeared in Antioch from the third to the fifth hour.⁵⁶ Burgess identifies this star as a comet that appeared on 16 February 336.⁵⁷ Given the confused description and lack of details, traits not common among the entries that Burgess identifies, Burgess further asserts that the author of the *Continuatio* was not present in Antioch at that time.⁵⁸ Such a circumstance would explain the apparent lack of precise dating and even the mistake in the record, if Theophanes' AM 5826 is an accurate representation of the entry's chronology originally found in the Antiochene chronicle.

This theoretical absence coincides perfectly with the time when Eusebius of Emesa was away from Antioch. Eusebius left the city sometime after the deposition of Eustathius of Antioch only to be again present by the time of the Dedication Council of 341.⁵⁹ According to both Socrates and Sozomen, he left the city in order to avoid ordination there and instead embraced the study of philosophy in Alexandria.⁶⁰ Unfortunately, it is not known when Eustathius suffered the loss of his bishopric.⁶¹ To make matters more complicated, there were two short-lived bishops who held the position for an undetermined time before it eventually came to Flacillus, the bishop during the time of the Dedication Council. Robert Winn, building on others, suggests that Eusebius may have been a candidate for the episcopacy of Antioch during one of these vacancies and fled in order to avoid that fate.⁶² Though there is not enough information to know when during this period his exit took place, the *Continuatio* may offer a clue. The last detailed entry regarding Antioch and its environs involved a famine that broke out in 332.⁶³ From that point until 341 the chronicle, as reconstructed by Burgess, departed from its typical Antiochene focus and included only one entry—the confused record of

⁵⁶ 'καὶ ἐφάνη ἀστὴρ ἐν Ἀντιοχείᾳ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ κατὰ τὸ ἀνατολικὸν μέρος καπνίζων σφόδρα ὡς ἀπὸ καμίνου, ἀπὸ ὥρας τρίτης ἕως ὥρας πέμπτης': quoted in Burgess, *Studies*, 156.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* 218.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ See Winn, *Eusebius of Emesa*, 32–3.

⁶⁰ Socrates, *HE* ii.9; Sozomen, *HE* iii.6. For the ascetic implications behind his 'study of philosophy' see Winn, *Eusebius of Emesa*, 35.

⁶¹ Various dates, ranging from 326 to 331, have been offered by historians; for a listing of recent arguments see Winn, *Eusebius of Emesa*, 33 n. 38.

⁶² *Ibid.* 33 n. 37.

⁶³ Burgess, *Studies*, 168–9.

the ‘smoking star’ – involving that city. This relative silence may be evidence for Eusebius of Emesa’s absence, and it is possible that his residence elsewhere may have begun shortly after 332 and may have lasted until the Dedication Council itself.⁶⁴

At the very least, it is certain that Eusebius was absent from Antioch for some years and would not have had first-hand knowledge of the city during that time. Furthermore, it is important to consider the type of person who, without being an eye-witness, would seek to record an otherwise unimportant event. It is one thing to record a comet that made an impression on you personally; it is another to seek out second- or even third-hand information about the stars in order to include it in your chronicle.

Furthermore, other aspects of the *Continuatio*, such as the mention of certain, otherwise minor, figures, become more intelligible through this proposed authorship by Eusebius of Emesa. If Burgess’s theory of a pro-Nicene layman as the author were correct, it would be difficult to account for the inclusion of two minor church clerics: indeed, both the existence and the success of Zenobius, who built the Martyrs’ Shrine in Jerusalem, and Eustathius, a locally-renowned presbyter from Constantinople, come to us primarily through the *Continuatio*.⁶⁵ What is puzzling about these entries is the very specific knowledge that is evident in the unknown author’s entry. The Martyrium was an integral part of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, a structure that was probably completed in 335 after some ten years of construction.⁶⁶ Zenobius’ fame would undoubtedly have spread upon its completion, though the fact that his name was apparently recorded only in accounts derived from the lost history is striking. Even more intriguing is the author’s apparent knowledge of Eustathius, who, like Zenobius, is not otherwise mentioned. Burgess suggests that these two disparate figures met the author of the history at some later time while they travelled through Antioch. This, he argues, would explain how it is that the unknown historian, whose knowledge of Constantinople and its affairs is otherwise limited, could know an obscure figure like Eustathius who achieved only

⁶⁴ Robert Winn agrees with a late return for Eusebius, though he believes that Eusebius remained in Egypt until 337: *Eusebius of Emesa*, 33–4. Athanasius returned from his first exile during that year, and Winn argues that Eusebius may have witnessed the people’s joy at Athanasius’ return, which, in turn, may have shaped his decision to refuse the see of Alexandria at the Dedication Council. There is nothing inherently contradictory between Winn’s suggestion and the theory that Eusebius did not return to Antioch until 341. R. P. C. Hanson (*The Search*, 387–8) argues that Eusebius returned to Antioch in 335, but there is no particular reason to believe that he returned then as opposed to 336 or even a later year.

⁶⁵ Prosper of Aquitaine also mentions Eustathius, but his account is derivative from that of Jerome: *PL* li.576. See also Richard Krautheimer, ‘The Constantinian basilica’, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* xxi (1967), 139–40 n. 77.

⁶⁶ For the date of completion see E. D. Hunt, ‘Constantine and Jerusalem’, this *JOURNAL* xlvi (1997), 421–2.

local fame.⁶⁷ Burgess dates this hypothetical meeting to the year 336 or later, because he uses the ‘smoking star’ above to emphasise the hypothetical layman’s absence from Antioch.⁶⁸ This would explain how the author came to interact with figures not associated with Antioch.

Yet Eusebius of Emesa’s presence in Alexandria explains even more conveniently how it was that these two men found a place in the *Continuatio*. Eusebius may have journeyed to Jerusalem during his absence from Antioch in order to be present at the dedication of this building and thus interacted there with these clerics. By 341 Eusebius had associated with and gained the trust of Eusebius of Nicomedia, who by then was the bishop of Constantinople. It is possible that Eusebius of Emesa, during his travels outside Antioch, came to know locally prominent figures from Constantinople who may have accompanied Eusebius of Nicomedia during his journeys through the Levant and elsewhere during the 330s.

This hypothesis gains strength from the realisation that the last specific entry concerning events in Alexandria involved the elevation to the episcopate of Gregory in 339.⁶⁹ Burgess suggests that ‘whatever episcopal source’ the author had employed ended at this point.⁷⁰ While this may be so, it is even simpler to propose that Eusebius of Emesa returned to Antioch after Gregory became bishop of Antioch and perhaps in conjunction with the impending Dedication Council. This would neatly explain both the return of an Antiochene focus to the chronicle in 341 and the dearth of Alexandrian material beginning at that same time.

Even Burgess’s observations regarding the language of the chronicle are germane. Burgess notes that the Greek employed is superior to the spoken Koine but not indicative of the highest education.⁷¹ The bishop of Emesa apparently learned Greek as his second language after Syriac, and it is easy to understand how his style could fall short of the most polished Greek prose.⁷² Nor is Burgess’s description of the chronicle’s language as ‘ordinary and sometimes clumsy’ incompatible with the fact that Eusebius was an orator.⁷³ The genre of a chronicle, with its abbreviated statements, is far from that of a didactic or persuasive sermon, and there have been many who can preach well but whose writings are not of the same quality. Moreover, Burgess himself notes that the author of the continuation

⁶⁷ Burgess, *Studies*, 219.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.* 218.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.* 158, 238.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.* 238.

⁷¹ *Ibid.* 144.

⁷² Ter Haar Romeny, *A Syrian in Greek dress*, 9–10.

⁷³ Burgess, *Studies*, 144.

emulated the writing style of Eusebius of Caesarea, the very man who taught the future bishop of Emesa.⁷⁴

There remains the suggestion that the secular material implies a lay author. It is true that much of the information in the reconstruction is focused on temporal affairs. Except for a passing reference to the expulsion of Arius by St Alexander of Alexandria and the summoning of the ecumenical council of Nicaea, the *Continuatio's* author avoids even indirect mention of the strife then dominating the Christian hierarchy.⁷⁵ Instead of records of councils and episcopal depositions, earthquakes seemingly alternate with military operations or details about foreign lands.

If the theory is correct that Eusebius of Emesa was the chronicle's author, the question remains why a bishop would write of such things while avoiding affairs presumably closer to his heart. First, it is important to remember that the fragments presented by Burgess are a reconstruction; perhaps data concerned more exclusively with the Church have since been lost and our reading is subsequently biased. One can easily imagine a scenario in which later pro-Nicene authors excised non-Nicene (or even insufficiently anti-'Arian') material from their accounts. Even if this is not so and the *Continuatio's* secular bent is indicative of the entire work, it does not follow that its author was not Eusebius, let alone not a cleric. It can be explained by recalling that the material preserved in the two ecclesiastical histories of Socrates and Sozomen demonstrates that Eusebius of Emesa had a keen mind for things not commonly associated with his duties as a bishop. His stargazing and his presence on at least one military campaign reveal a man whose life encompassed many interests and whose experience involved far more than the world of ecclesiastical disputes.

It would not be surprising if the very ecclesiastical discord from which Eusebius distanced himself in his extant sermons had been treated in a similar fashion in his chronicle. The very nature of the chronicle's fact-driven genre may have led Eusebius to avoid the entire issue as much as he could. In Eusebius' preaching, he hesitated to name individuals involved in the contemporary theological strife even as he rebuked in general those who sought their understanding outside the bounds of Scripture. The distinction between a generic condemnation and individual censure might be more difficult to maintain in the context of specific facts concerning councils, disputes and depositions. The self-consciously irenic

⁷⁴ *Ibid.* 132–3. The praise that Burgess found for Constantine in the Antiochene chronicle may also be related to the relationship between the two Eusebii and the desire of the bishop of Emesa to emulate the exuberant praise of Constantine by his predecessor.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.* 164–6, entries 16, 22.

Eusebius might have decided to avoid a potentially polemically-charged situation by ignoring developments subsequent to the Council of Nicaea.

Rather than focusing on the turmoil and division in the Church, he offered instead a vision of solidarity within the empire by demonstrating its power and identity *vis-à-vis* its often-hostile neighbours. Eusebius' own participation in at least one campaign presumably influenced his decision to describe imperial affairs in such a fashion. In addition, the bishop preached on the duty of the community to hold together in order to support its members or to avoid threats posed by those who did not share their faith.⁷⁶ Perhaps the bishop's chronicle sought to encourage this unity by reminding his listeners and readers that the real threat came not so much from their fellow Christians as from those outside either their shared Christian faith or their borders. The *Continuatio's* frequent praise of Constantine as a promoter of Christianity and victor over his enemies hints, too, that in the author's mind religious peace and imperial stability were inextricably associated.⁷⁷

Nor should one rule out that a cleric wrote the *Continuatio* simply on the basis of the frequency of non-religious data. Eusebius' life and interests provide an obvious context in which such a choice of material would be natural. There is also the possibility that personal friendship or esteem for Constantius II – perhaps consciously modelled on the prior relationship between Eusebius' teacher Eusebius of Caesarea and Constantine in the 330s – guided the composition of the chronicle. For example, despite the small size of the young diocese of Emesa, it apparently received special notice in church-building efforts by Constantius.⁷⁸ The fact that its church was singled out by the historian Sozomen for its particular beauty may reflect its imperial patron's personal regard for its bishop, a regard perhaps reflected and reciprocated in the content of the *Continuatio*.

Burgess's last great objection to non-Nicene authorship is Jerome's obvious disdain for heretics, which presumably would have inhibited his use of an 'Arian' chronicle. Jerome's own testimony highlights that many emulated and diligently read Eusebius of Emesa's works.⁷⁹ What the saint does not tell his audience, however, is whether he himself is among them: in his *On Galatians* Jerome depended, in part, on the commentary penned by Eusebius.⁸⁰ Other evidence demonstrates that the hermit was

⁷⁶ See Winn, *Eusebius of Emesa*, 243–49, esp. pp. 247–8. See also Ralph Hennings, 'Eusebius von Emesa und die Juden', *Zeitschrift für antikes Christentum* (2001), 240–60.

⁷⁷ Compare Burgess, *Studies*, 126 and n. 47 above.

⁷⁸ Sozomen, *HE* iii.17. For details of the see of Emesa see Winn, *Eusebius of Emesa*, 41–5.

⁷⁹ Jerome, *De viris* xci. For the popularity of the Antiochene continuation see also Burgess, *Studies*, 146.

⁸⁰ Buytaert, 'L'Heritage littéraire', 175–7.

well versed in Eusebius' exegetical writings and methodology, though he often disagreed with the position taken by the bishop.⁸¹

There is also the odd presence of Eusebius of Emesa within the *Chronicle* of Jerome. The very fact that Eusebius is included among the entries is difficult to explain. He was, after all, not a prominent polemicist and apparently shunned controversy, as when he refused the prestigious see of Alexandria; there appears no reason for Jerome to include him. A possible answer can be found in examples left by two other educated churchmen. Jerome dedicates the concluding section to himself in his *De viris* and Eusebius of Caesarea dominates the tenth book of his *Ecclesiastical history* with his own sermon. Consequently, it should be no surprise if Eusebius of Emesa mentioned his own efforts at the end of his chronicle.⁸² Jerome, meanwhile, may have grudgingly included this reference because of the fact that Eusebius was too well-known for him to omit.⁸³ Jerome, who was known for being hesitant in giving proper attribution to others, may have simply decided to blacken Eusebius' character in this entry as a way of disassociating himself from one of his main sources.⁸⁴ In support of this notion is the evidence from *De viris* that the saint masked his dependence upon others and even claimed to have read sources to which he had no access.⁸⁵ One last detail that strengthens this argument is Jerome's own testimony that Eusebius composed works of an historical nature that became popular reading among some.⁸⁶

Thanks to Richard Burgess's research, the passages collected by Bidez can now be divided into at least two different sources. Burgess dismisses the idea that an 'Arian' wrote the Antiochene continuation because he assumes that Jerome would never use such a source. As has been shown, however, this claim is not conclusive. Other evidence indicates not only that the chronicle was by a non-Nicene hand but also that that hand belonged to Eusebius of Emesa.

⁸¹ See Adam Kamesar, *Jerome, Greek scholarship, and the Hebrew Bible*, Oxford 1993, 126–75.

⁸² Jerome mentions Eusebius' compositions ('multa et uaria conscribit') in an entry (236i = AD 347) close to that marking the year 350. The proximity to the suggested ending of the *Continuatio Antiochiensis Eusebii* could indicate that Eusebius of Emesa concluded his work by mentioning himself or his own writings in some fashion.

⁸³ For Jerome's reluctant witness to Eusebius' reputation see *De viris* xci.

⁸⁴ For examples of Jerome's 'plagiarism' see Kelly, *Jerome*, 145–6. For the saint's proclivity for using devastating satire to discredit his foes see David S. Wiesen, *St. Jerome as a satirist*, Ithaca 1964.

⁸⁵ 'But perhaps the most vivid impression it leaves is of his conceit and vanity. It was these which led him not only to conceal his sources in ways which deserve to be called dishonest, but to give such exaggerated prominence to himself in the closing section': Kelly, *Jerome*, 177–8.

⁸⁶ Jerome, *De viris* xci; see n. 53 above for the text.