

NOTES AND DISCUSSIONS

CLAUDIAN AND THE *NOTITIA DIGNITATUM*

T. D. BARNES

*ne quid tamen orbe reciso
venditor amittat, provincia quaeque superstes
dividitur geminumque duplex passura tribunal
cogitur alterius pretium sarcire peremptae.
sic mihi restituunt populos; hac arte reperta
rektorum numerum terris pereuntibus augent.*

CLAUDIAN puts these words into the mouth of Aurora as she appeals to Stilico to rescue the East from the eunuch Eutropius in the summer of 399 (*In Eutropium* 2.585–590). The exaggeration is obvious and was doubtless intended by Claudian to be recognized as such: none of his audience in Milan can seriously have thought that Eutropius divided every province of Asia Minor and the East. Only a single province need be in question¹—which it may be possible to identify.

The provincial divisions of the Roman Empire in Claudian's day are known from two principal sources. First, the list of eastern bishops who attended the Council of Constantinople in 381 is extant in Greek, Latin, and Syriac: although some eastern provinces are not represented, the list groups the bishops and their sees by provinces which are clearly identical with those of the secular administration.² Second, the *Notitia Dignitatum*, which registers the provincial governors of both East and West: although the eastern sections have received at least one addition after 2 January 423 (*Oriens* 17.8: *tabularium dominarum Augustarum*), the state of affairs which they basically reflect must be earlier than 413, since they omit altogether the *comes Ponticae*, who is first attested in that year (*CTh* 6.13.1).³ The province or provinces divided in 399 may be sought among those provinces which the *Notitia Dignitatum* attests as divided, but for whose division before 399 no evidence exists. They number four:

¹A. Cameron, *Claudian. Poetry and Propaganda at the Court of Honorius* (Oxford 1970) 131: "presumably only one or two provinces were involved in any case."

²C. H. Turner, *JTS* 15 (1914) 168–170 (Greek); *Ecclesiae Occidentalis Monumenta Iuris Antiquissima* 2.3 (Oxford 1939) 433–464 (Latin); F. Schulthess, *Abh. Göttingen*, Phil.-hist. Kl., N.F. 10.2 (1908) 113–120 (Syriac).

³A. H. M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire* 3 (Oxford 1964) 347–351. For a survey of opinions on the nature and date of the *Notitia Dignitatum*, see E. Demougeot, *Latomus* 34 (1975) 1079–1134.

Galatia (not represented in the list of 381), Cilicia, Syria, and Palaestina.⁴ It is theoretically possible that Eutropius divided all four provinces. But Malalas attributes the division of Cilicia and Syria to the younger Theodosius who ruled from 408 to 450 (p. 365 Bonn), and that can most easily be construed as an error for the other Theodosius (379–395).⁵ Moreover, there is a positive reason for deducing that one of the four divisions occurred after the other three.

Recent research on the *Notitia Dignitatum* appears to have established that it is basically a document compiled not long after 390, which was later revised in a partly haphazard and unsystematic fashion.⁶ More specifically, it has been argued very cogently that the eastern sections of the *Notitia* with two *magistri equitum et peditum in praesenti* (Oriens 1.5; 5–6) reflect the conditions of 392–394 when Theodosius was preparing an expedition to suppress a western usurper.⁷ Now the index lists the *consularis* of Galatia above the *consularis* of Bithynia (1.68–70) and the *praeses* of Galatia Salutaris last among the *praesides* of the diocese of Pontica (1.103–111), and the list of provinces administered by the praetorian prefect of Oriens observes the same ranking (2.41–51). But the entry for the *vicarius* of Pontica has Bithynia before Galatia and Galatia Salutaris preceding the six provinces which it follows in the index (25.15–25). It may reasonably be inferred that Galatia was divided after the original list was drawn up, and that only one list of the relevant three has been properly revised to take account of the ranking of the two new provinces formed by dividing Galatia.

If this line of argument is correct, then Galatia will be the province which Eutropius divided in 399—and Claudian can be claimed indirectly to confirm that the *Notitia Dignitatum* was originally compiled before that date.⁸

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO,
INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY, PRINCETON

⁴The new provinces are styled Galatia and Galatia Salutaris, Cilicia and Cilicia Secunda, Syria and Syria Salutaris, Palaestina and Palaestina Secunda.

⁵Jones (above, n. 3) 391. For the division of provinces by the first Theodosius, see now A. Lippold, *RE* Supp. 13 (1973) 914.

⁶See the recent studies of M. Hoffmann, *Das spätrömische Bewegungsheer und die Notitia Dignitatum*. Epigraphische Studien 7.1 (1969); 7.2 (1970); J. H. Ward, "The *Notitia Dignitatum*," *Latomus* 33 (1974) 397–434.

⁷Hoffmann (above, n. 6) 1.516–520.

⁸I am grateful to Professor F. M. Clover for comments on the first draft of the present note.