

Issues of Identity Metamorphoses in Transitional Epochs

Issues of Identity Metamorphoses in Transitional Epochs:

*Social Changes
and Mental Evolution*

Edited by

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INTRODUCTION

When a reader takes up a new book, he immediately asks the question: What is this book about? Below you can see the answers to three questions: What? Where? And when?

So, what is the subject of this book? The subject of this book is the phenomenon of identity. Throughout their lives many people ask themselves the question “Who am I?” several times in attempts to determine their place in the social structure, to attribute themselves to specific social groups—ethnic, class, professional, religious and others. The beginning of the 21st century was marked by the interest of scientists and the public in the phenomenon of the formation and dynamics of identity as one of the main factors in the development of society.

On the one hand, the term “identity” implies typically common and constant qualities in a person, and on the other hand—something unique in the totality of all the identification features of one person. Identity also implies relations with a collective or social group. Everybody may have several identities at once, be a member of many groups, and, in this case, the dynamics of identity is expressed in the possibility of transition from one group to another. This is how a specific perception of oneself is formed as a part of the whole, manifested in attitude, worldview, and emotional attitude to the world, behavior and communicative acts.

The self-determination of a person, the identification of himself with a certain human community, and the identification and recognition on this basis of his own “ability”, allow the individual to see himself as a full, free and “significant” personality. Identity as a social phenomenon is vital to the person; it manifests itself in all types of human activity and is the result of the socialization of the individual. Moreover, the formation of identity does not often occur according to the principle of positive construction, but according to the principle of opposing ourselves (or us) to others (“we vs. they”, “ours vs. alien”).

Answering the second question, we note that our work has a fairly wide regional coverage: from the Roman provinces of 4–5 AD in the west, to the Asia Minor territories, Cyprus, Bosphorus and

Russia in the east. This is explained by the desire of the authors to analyze changes in the identity of a person of different lands and epochs. So we come to the third question: when?

The situation of social instability complicates the task of gaining identity, as social stereotypes, positive values and norms are fuzzy. Significant changes in public morals are taking place, the previous type of spiritual culture is being destroyed, and there are no significant social forces affirming new norms and principles.

History provides us with many examples of the dynamics of identification processes in various historical periods including transitional ones. Based on the above considerations, the idea of holding the conference “Sociocultural upgrading of identity in transitional epochs” arose at the time. The event was held on October 11–12, 2019 at Belgorod National Research University. The conference was attended by scientists representing universities of various cities of Russia, Germany and Cyprus. The researchers made presentations covering such aspects of the issue as: identity and mentality (in transitional historical periods); issues of self-identification (identity crisis) in transitional periods of history; identity and historical events; and identification as orientation to the “Other”.

The present work follows the form of conference proceedings, including the selected papers. It is devoted to issues of manifestation of identity, and its dynamics under the influence of changing historical conditions in various transition periods. Late Antiquity is rightfully considered as one such transitive epoch.

Chapter I “Identity Metamorphoses in Late Antiquity” includes the papers focusing on changes in the political and religious spheres of Late Antiquity, which influenced human identity.

In his paper, Dmitriy Bogdanov discusses the perception of the most important events at the turn of the 4th and 5th centuries: Stilicho’s campaigns and his assassination, the Gothic invasion and the fall of Rome. The split of the Roman Empire finally took shape in 395. Actually, the era of the dominate came to an end and the regime of military regents was established in the West. At the end of the 4th century was the climax of the centuries-old confrontation of the old order and the new one, the Empire and the *Barbaricum*, paganism and Christianity, the capital and the provinces. Political decline was inextricably associated with the problem of the sociocultural identification of the Romans. The author states that the emperor’s role in these processes is indicative: formally

possessing unlimited power, Honorius was unable to influence the new order and so he was forced to consolidate it.

The next two studies consider the religious sphere of Late Antique society. The research by Elena Litovchenko is devoted to the analysis of the views and works of a number of Late Antique aristocrats who converted to Christianity and became bishops—Paulinus of Nola, Sidonius Apollinaris, Hilarius and Caesarius, both bishops of Arles, etc. In the context of the structural crisis affecting all spheres of life, in the sociocultural meaning, unique processes begin that testify to the formation of a new type of personality, examples of which can be representatives of the higher social stratus of the 4th–6th centuries, “retooled” from imperial servants to clergy. The main goal of this research is to retrace the process of transformation of their views: from pagan to Christian. The author proposes to designate this phenomenon as “mental inversion”, i.e. the “refocusing” of human consciousness in the perception of one and the same object of reality, as a result of which, the observer’s subjective perception of the familiar picture changes to the opposite. The author believes that mental inversion is an integral feature of the transitional periods of history.

The article written by Mikhail Gratsianskiy is dedicated to the study of the acts of the session of the Roman clergy held in December 531 under the chairmanship of Pope Boniface II (530–532), which have been preserved as an introduction to the so-called *Collectio Thessalonicensis*. During the session the representatives of Stephanus, a metropolitan of Larissa in Greece, handed in petitions, which referred to that case, and, according to the acts, brought with them the *Collectio* itself. The article investigates the circumstances of the deposition by the Patriarch of Constantinople of the metropolitan Stephanus of Larissa, the Primate of the churches of Thessaly, the latter being a province of the Roman Empire located in the Prefecture of Illyricum. It also analyzes the content of the petitions of Stephanus and his comrades, as well as the statements contained in the acts, with the aim of demonstrating the perception by Stephanus’ suffragans of the Roman ecclesiology and the prerogatives of the See of Rome as the supreme judicial instance in the Church. The author concludes that those passages in the petitions, which speak about the pope’s exclusive rights of jurisdiction over all Churches, including the Illyrian ones, as well as the remark, made by the Bishop of Echinus Theodore, that preceded the presentation of the *Collectio Thessalonicensis*, are in all likelihood interpolated. The author revises the opinions regarding

the origin of the *Collectio* from Thessalonica. As a result, he concludes that the materials presented during the sessions of 531 by Theodore of Echinus cannot originate either from Thessalonica or from the rest of Illyricum. The author postulates their Roman origin, and substantiates a thesis on the artificial compilation of the acts of 531 and the *Collectio Thessalonicensis*, that was carried out presumably during the pontificate of Nicholas I (858–867).

Chapter II “Identity in Demarcation with the ‘Other’” includes two papers about the Late Antique Bosphorus and one about the Breviaries of Eutropius and Festus. The opposition of “ours” and “alien” appeared in the relations between representatives of the Roman civilization and the barbarian world.

Marina Ryabtseva and Sergey Kutomanov consider the German influence on women’s fashion in the Late Antique Bosphorus. The female costume of the migration period is an important indicator of the social status of its owner. The Bosphorus of the Late Antique time did not stand aside from interethnic contacts, as evidenced by the materials of its necropolis. Under the dominance of the culture of the southern Russian steppes, many researchers talk about the internationalization of fashion. In this regard, the materials used at the burials of the nobility are especially illustrative. In general, the Bosphorus of the studied period is characterized by a large number of things that reflect the barbaric influence on women’s costume. The most striking confirmation of this is the custom of wearing paired brooches, the origins of which can be found in the East German environment. The materials of female burials also allow us to trace the evolution of women’s costume, which is largely dictated by the arrival at the Bosphorus of new groups of Germans in the 5th–early 6th centuries from the territories of Central and Eastern Europe. In turn, representatives of the German nobility borrow from the Bosphorus women the tradition of wearing certain items of jewelry (earrings with a figured shield, etc.).

Elena Semicheva reckons that Late Antique compendiums are representative sources for studying the issues of identity, because of their popularity among a wide range of readers who were not already erudite or even educated by the 4th century; they acted as a kind of tool for constructing stereotypes in the mass consciousness. The purpose of this study is to identify the specifics of attitudes towards Western and Eastern people in the Breviaries of Eutropius and Festus. In the text of Eutropius, people opposing the Romans are presented primarily in ethnic terms or through the

category of “barbarians”, and Eutropius in some cases points to them as allies and “*amici populi Romani*”. There is a difference in the assessment of wars with a western or eastern adversary, but both directions are perceived by Eutropius as a field of Roman expansion, the desire for supremacy over the whole world. The situation with the Breviary of Festus is somewhat different. Representing an even more abridged version of Roman history, this text is interesting not so much for its trivial content as for its original structure. In fact, Festus presented to Emperor Valens a consolidated report on the territorial conquests of Rome, with special emphasis on the eastern border. Moreover, the first part offering a wider historical context is a necessary condition for understanding the direct purpose of the author that is expressed in the chapters of the second part. According to the researchers, the above fits into the framework of the author’s patriotic ideas focused on the eastern foreign policy vector.

The propaganda nature of this brochure is more pronounced; it was intended to form an idea of the East and relations with it, which were necessary for the official court, and to prepare public opinion regarding the eastern campaign of Valens.

Sergey Yartsev’s study is devoted to a difficult period in the history of the Goths who migrated to the land of the Bosphorus after the Hun invasion of 376. The price of such a relocation to the territory of the ancient state was the inevitable loss of the migrants’ ethnic identity. It was for this reason that the Goths who found themselves in the Roman Empire massively accepted Arianism, which actually turned into an important element of the ethnic consciousness of the Germans. Nevertheless, on the Bosphorus the barbarians encountered not a pure alien Greco-Roman culture, but a unique cultural synthesis of ancient and barbarian principles. The confrontation of migrants with the antique population was not so keenly expressed here, because, in fact, the Bosporans were Hellenized barbarians. It is for this reason that the Bosporan Goths did not follow the path of spiritual confrontation with the ancient civilization, but, as their spiritual mentors desired, took the side of the Catholic (Nicene) religion. Consequently, it was on the Bosphorus that the most favorable conditions were created for the relatively complete integration of the Goths into the ancient society.

The paper of Nikolay Bolgov opens the third chapter “Regional and Urban Identity. The city of Caesarea Philippi is located in the extreme north-east of Palestine, near Mount Hermon and the source of the Jordan River, on the border with Syria (now

the Golan Heights). In Roman times, there was a powerful cult of the god Pan. Therefore, the Christianization of the city occurred with significant difficulties. The temples of Pan and Apollo were replaced by Christian buildings. A number of authors (Eusebius, Philostorgius, and Malala) reported that a statue of Christ was erected in this city. A trip to the site of Paneas in May 2019 made it possible to explore the archaeological site, on which the remains of temples and the place of the statue of Christ were preserved.

The article of Sergey Prokopenko is devoted to the study of the development of the city structure of Perge that was located in the historical region of Pamphylia in the 4th–6th centuries. Against the general background of continuity, it is important to identify the key points of transformation of the urban environment, indicating the transformation of Perge into an early Byzantine city center. The withdrawal from the principles of arranging the Roman city in Perge was manifested in a change in the functionality of ancient buildings, their reconstruction, the reclaiming of new spaces within the city, the decline and desolation of once vibrant urban areas, the reorientation of some squares and changes in urban infrastructure.

Andrey Papkov's article discusses the process of expanding the state territory of Russia in the southern direction, which took place in the 16th–17th centuries. The author analyzes the process of forming a network of Orthodox churches and monasteries in the frontier zone on the southern outskirts of Russia. An attempt is made to determine the role of the state in this process. The system of church governance, which was formed in the Russian border territories, is studied. The author concludes that the state ensured the construction of the required number of churches and monasteries, as well as allocated funds to ensure their future activities. Throughout the 17th century monastic construction on the southern outskirts of Russia was impossible without the direct participation of the state, and the specifics of the border region led to the formation of a tendency to meet church needs at state expense.

Iosif Hadjikyriakos gives us an example of the life of one Italian family in Cyprus from the 18th century till today. Based on what we know so far about Giovanni Carlo Mantovani, it can be argued that he is a characteristic and iconic case of an 18th century Italian economic immigrant. The exemplary feature of his case is attributed to the non-exceptionality of the Italian merchant's profile and its sociohistorical dimension. Coincidentally, we have certain information which sheds light upon the more private aspects of

Mantovani's life, as compared to other contemporary Europeans who lived in Cyprus. It is worth noting that the Mantovani family is still present, actively evolving in the field of commerce, following the steps of their ancestor Giovanni Carlo.

The authors hope that the content of this book will be useful as well as attractive for a wide audience interested in various aspects of identity.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BF	Bosporan Phenomenon: conference proceedings (St. Petersburg)
CSEL	Corpus scriptorum ecclesiastorum Latinorum
IEJ	Israel Exploration Journal
INJ	Israel Numismatic Journal
IRAIMK	Proceedings of the Russian Academy of history of material culture (Moscow)
MAIET	Materials on the Archeology, History and Ethnography of Tavria (Simferopol)
MGH. AA	Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Auctores antiquissimi
MGH. SRM	Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores rerum Merovingicarum
MPL	Migne Patrologia Latina
PL	Patrologia Latina
PLRE	The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire
RAN (RAS)	Russian Academy of Science

CHAPTER I.

IDENTITY METAMORPHOSES IN LATE ANTIQUITY

THE CRISIS OF ROMAN IDENTITY DURING THE REIGN OF HONORIUS

DMITRIY BOGDANOV

During the dominate the Roman emperor had virtually unlimited power. That power allowed Theodosius the Great to establish control over the entire territory of the Roman Empire for a short time and made it necessary to maximize the personal power of the emperor as a symbol of Rome.

The solution of domestic political problems depended directly on overcoming the consequences of the breakdown due to the Adrianople catastrophe. Theodosius, who proved himself as a successful commander during the Gothic War, proceeded to a policy of mutually beneficial alliance with the Goths, Vandals, Huns, and Alans because he had no opportunity to speak from the hegemonic position, as the rulers of previous eras.

As a result of an attempt to centralize, Theodosius' active religious policy provoked new conflicts that arose between the followers of Nicene Christianity (to which the emperor himself belonged), the barbarian warriors who gravitated to Arianism, and the old pagan Roman nobility (M. Vedeshkin, 2018).

It was the inevitable aggravation of the confrontation between the old and the new, barbarian and Roman, pagan and Christian, western and eastern, Rome and the provinces. That conflict, stretching over several centuries, would become the characteristic of the Late Antique society, marking the end of antiquity and the transition to the next stage (from the 4th to the beginning of the 7th centuries in the East of the Mediterranean).

The death of Theodosius determined the new appearance of the Empire. The emperor's power was firmly connected with authority, which minor Arcadius and Honorius did not have, unlike their powerful father. In an effort to strengthen Rome and Constantinople and form mobile combat-ready armies capable of quickly counteracting usurpation and military invasion attempts, Theodosius actually laid the foundation for two independent states on the territory of the Roman Empire. The vacuum was filled by

successful generals (mainly of barbarian origin) and skilled courtiers.

In the last years of his life Theodosius took measures to prohibit the public worship of pagan cults and officially made Christianity the state religion (S. Williams, G. Friell, 1998). From the beginning of February 391, he banned public representations of the pagan lifestyle. Subsequently, the most famous actions became the final removal of the Altar of Victory from the Roman Senate after the overthrow of the pagan usurper Eugene in 394, followed by the cancelling of the Olympics (A. Kravchuk, 2011).

Despite the ban on a number of pagan holidays, the cancellation of the Olympic Games, the rejection of the pontifex's robes and the extinguishing of the eternal flame of the vestal, certain pagan rites were preserved.¹

The cult of idols, which began to be neglected and destroyed by the decrees of Constantine, was destroyed in his rule.²

The main figure in the West of the Roman Empire at the turn of the 4th–5th centuries was Stilicho (J.M. O'Flynn, 1983, I. Hughes, 2010). Undoubtedly, he implemented his ideas with Honorius' support and approval. Stilicho had to have some reason to conduct active work in relation to the East Roman court, even if it was sufficiently formal, and the secret position of the guardian of both emperors could be such a reason (O. Przhigodskaya, 2012).

Emperor Honorius was born in 384 in Constantinople (PLRE I, 442). In addition to his brother Arcadius and sister Galla Placidia, he had a sister Pulcheria, who died in infancy (S. Oost, 1968). His mother, Aelia Flaccilla, the first wife of Theodosius I, died of a disease in 386.

Already, at the age of two, Honorius was appointed consul. It is symbolic that in 389, he became a triumph after defeating the Magnus Maximus along with his father. On January 23, 393, Honorius was proclaimed the August and the West was left under his control.

The last act of Theodosius, who died of dropsy after completing the campaign against Arbogast and Eugenius, was the appointment of his son-in-law as guardian of the eleven-year-old Honorius. Considering the emperor's youth, Stilicho, holding one of

¹ Lib., XXX, 8.

² Ruf., HE, II, 19.

the highest positions in the army, had both civil and military power concentrated in his hands. However, emphasizing unlimited power, he listened to the wishes of the young emperor and at the same time forced him to make a decision favorable to the realization of his own political goals.

According to Zosimus, in 398, when the marriage of Honorius and Maria (Stilicho's daughter) was resolved,

her mother Serena, seeing that her daughter was still too young for marriage, found a Solomon solution: finding her a woman who knew a lot about settling such things, she achieved that ... Maria ... even slept with him [the emperor], but he did not have the ability to fulfill his conjugal duty,³

which indirectly confirms the emperor's ascesis as most sources emphasize the platonic relationship between them.

Like his father, Honorius was a supporter of Nicene Christianity. Paradoxical as it may seem, it was precisely on the reign of Honorius that the pillars of the Christian faith flourished: St. Augustine and St. Jerome of Stridon (P. Heather, 2005). After African pagans revolted over the closure of their temples in 399, Augustine joined other bishops, who in 401 asked the government to pass new laws in order to "uproot the remains of idolatry".⁴

Unlike the emperor, Stilicho decided to burn the Sibylline books (which were mourned by Claudius Rutilius Namatianus (II, 52–60)) and tended to be tolerant. This fact, coupled with a barbaric origin, predetermined the negative attitude towards him of some church historians (for example, Paulus Orosius, ignoring Stilicho in his work).⁵

For several centuries, one of the most significant celebrations in the life of the Romans, of course, was a triumph—entry into the "eternal city" of the victorious commander and his solemn procession along a certain route. This was from the Field of Mars through the triumphal gates through the Circus Flaminius and the Circus Maximus via the Via Sacra ("The Sacred Way") to Capitoline Hill (M. Beard, 2007).

Three triumphs deserve special attention in the reign of Honorius: Mascezel (398), Stilicho (403), and Wallia (415). These are an indicator of the changes that occurred.

³ Zos., 28, 2.

⁴ Marc. Diac., 36–37.

⁵ Oros., VII, 35–39.

With the support of Stilicho, Mascezel forced Comes Gildo, the murderer of his children, to flee. Soon after, Gildo killed himself (Marcell. Chron., 398, 4), and Mascezel earned the right to be a triumphant, returning African territories to Honorius.⁶

Perhaps Mascezel's quick death was organized with the participation of Stilicho.⁷ Zosim is the only source that recorded the details of the death, but this may be an act of propaganda initiated by the Eastern Court, as other authors who described these events do not record similar circumstances.⁸

Soon there was Stilicho's triumph (403) after making peace with Alaric I. The barbarians received Illyric and stopped their campaign in Greece.⁹ Honorius personally convinced the senate of the success of his guardian's mission and shared Stilicho's triumph (J.M. O'Flynn, 1983). The triumph was celebrated on a grand scale. Honorius and Stilicho rode together in a triumphal chariot. Both wore heavy gold jewelry and traditional *triumphalia* ornaments, and their faces were painted (R. Matthews, 2007). A joint triumph was due to the desire to preserve traditions.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that Theodosius the Great changed the traditional route during his triumph: as a Christian, he did not want to enter the Temple of Jupiter on the top of Capitoline Hill, so he completed the procession in front of his entrance. For those senators who sought to continue their journey, he suggested choosing between worshipping a pagan god and loyalty to the Christian emperor.¹⁰ It was most likely on this route that the triumphs passed during the reign of the youngest son of Theodosius—Honorius (A. Cameron, 1970).

Athaulf's heir, Wallia, held his triumph in 416 and put Honorius in the carriage next to him.¹¹ This event is also confirmed by the description of the punishment of the usurper Priscus Attalus, who was caught and "held in the triumph of Honorius",¹² although the details of the procession were not preserved.

The route of triumphants became shorter, the role of the emperor became less and less important (if in 403 the decision of

⁶ Zos., V.11.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Oros., VII, 36.6.

⁹ Zos., V.25–26.

¹⁰ Zos., IV.59.

¹¹ Olymp., 31.

¹² Philost., 12.4–5; Oros., VII, 42.

Honorius to divide triumph with Stilicho confirmed the increased influence of the “emperor’s guardian”,¹³ then in 416, Wallia used him as the non-executive figurehead).

Thus, from an attempt to emphasize the greatness of an empire, which was on the verge of collapse, by maintaining centuries-old traditions, precisely at this time the triumph became hours of glory as a reward to one person who ceased to personify the state. This attitude towards triumph persisted until the fall of the Western Roman Empire.

It is also noteworthy that not a single triumphal arch was erected in the reign of Honorius to the 36 ones, which stood at the end of the 4th century in Rome (M. Sergeenko, 2000).

For a long time, gladiatorial fights were an indicator of the prosperity of the empire, and by the middle of the 4th century the craft of gladiators was still at the peak of popularity, in spite of the spread of Christianity and the restrictions on holding games in the eastern provinces of the empire. The last memorable case of using gladiators as a military force was the struggle for the papal throne after the death of Pope Liberius in 366 between Damasus and Ursinus (Amm. Marc. XXVII, 3). Like many less significant traditions in the life of the Romans the fights did not arouse the approval of the emperor Theodosius and were almost completely devoid of state funding.¹⁴

However, this did not stop fans from playing games at their own expense. From the surviving letters of Quintus Aurelius Symmachus (c. 340-402) his repeated attempts to arrange games in honor of the career advancement of his son are known. In the first case, in 393 the delivery of animals was unsuccessful despite huge expense, and 29 of the 30 captured gladiators strangled each other. Symmachus declared:

I do not want to hear anything about those villains who turned out to be worse than Spartacus. (46)

However, this failure did not stop him when his son was elected praetor in 401. In a few years preparations for the games in the Colosseum began and, therefore, he managed to collect bears from Italy and a number of northern regions, horses from Spain,

¹³ Zos., V.1.1.

¹⁴ Zos., IV.57.

dogs from Britain, lions, leopards and crocodiles from Africa, which, apparently, cost him a fortune.¹⁵

Emperor Honorius in 399 decided to close the gladiator schools (V. Goroncharovskiy, 2009). The Colosseum was used less and less (Circus Maximus also bore the same fate) – during only 55 of 176 holidays a year, only 10 of which featured fights (M. Beard, K. Hopkins, 2007).

The culmination of the events was the death of Telemachus who rolled down from the spectator stands on the smooth wall of the arena and tried to stop the battle. After him, many people jumped into the arena, and a fight ensued, which turned into a rebellion.¹⁶ Telemachus, later recognized as a martyr and saint, became a victim. Honorius, shocked by what he saw, made an unprecedented decision: the ban on *mundus* in Rome (I. Hughes, 2010).

The next blow to Roman identity was the move of Honorius and his court to the north of Italy. Honorius understood that it was unsafe to remain in his residence in Mediolanum, and in 402 he moved the capital to Ravenna (I. Hughes, 2010). Protected by swamps and located on the seashore, it remained the main city of the Western Empire for three-quarters of the fifth century, until all of Italy passed into the hands of the barbarians.

Honorius was the first emperor of the era of military regency, so his departure was a local event, but it is important in terms of changing understanding: the emperor lacked vital energy; he was apathetic, uncharacteristic of the activity inherent in the Roman emperors of the last century. Ravenna became for him as a *refugium*, which consolidated the status of Ravenna as an important port and residence of the emperor and the church. However, Stilicho did not support this initiative; this action damaged the image of the Eternal City and violated the Roman myth.

The Roman Senate continued to be a stronghold of the pagan opposition. The pagan aristocracy of Rome took full advantage of the usurper's political dependence on the support of the senatorial nobility for the restoration of the capital's cults: the "pagan revival" began in Italy from 393–394 (M. Vedeshkin, 2018).

At the beginning of the 5th century pagans were not numerous in the Senate, but seemed to have weight.¹⁷ Despite the

¹⁵ Olymp., 44.

¹⁶ Theod., V.21–30.

¹⁷ Soz., IX.6.

fact that, compared with the previous era, their role was not comparable, those senators tried to influence the religious policy of the state during the military regency of Stilicho, since the support of the capital's nobility and the authority of the senate were necessary for the commander to strengthen the position of Honorius' personal status (J. Matthews, 1990).

From the moment he came to power, Stilicho sought the support of influential senators and the senate in general: versus Gildo's revolt¹⁸ and the ransom to Alaric.¹⁹ The earliest evidence of Stilicho's appeal to the Senate was the granting of a complete amnesty to representatives of the metropolitan nobility who participated in the usurpation of Eugenius (M. Vedeshkin, 2018).

Nevertheless, Christianity, whose ideals were absorbed by Honorius from an early age, predetermined his detachment from solving a number of state-important issues, which, however, did not mean a refusal to determine the political course in general, as well as the nature of his platonic relations with his wives and the absence of an heir, aggravated the development of the institution of a military regency, and accumulated more power in the absence of a dynastic succession.

An insoluble contradiction arose: Stilicho's pro-Christian policy, due to his service to the benefit of the state, led to a conflict with the Senate, which was aggravated by a loyalty to paganism and Stilicho became a victim.

The role of Stilicho became especially noticeable after his death (I. Hughes, 2010). The year 408 was the next point (after Adrianople and the death of Theodosius, and the campaign of Radagaisus) at which the Empire lost its resource, which allowed it to maintain control over the situation. In this regard, the images of the rulers involved in the development of the Western Roman Empire were manifested in a new way: Stilicho seemed to be a positive figure, as he tirelessly sought to take the initiative, maintain and improve the existing situation, while Honorius was tragic: in self-relocating, the emperor ceased to bind his fate with the fate of the entire Empire, so Stilicho took on this burden.

After the fall of Stilicho, the anti-barbarian group at the court believed that only a "Roman" would be able to defend the interests of the empire even in August, without indulging the barbarian parts

¹⁸ Claud. Stil., I.327–329.

¹⁹ Zos., V.29.9.

of his army. However, the main thing was that in the new political regime of the empire in the West, a new military regent was needed.

The commander Constantius, whose origin was not in doubt, was best suited for this role. Orosius emphasized the origin of the new commander:

the state felt what good it finally found in the face of the Roman leader, and what danger it still has experienced, obeying so long a time the barbarian committees.²⁰

However, at a time when Constantius had not yet gained weight in the state, the emperor Honorius failed to change his political behavior, which led to the fall of the Eternal City in 410 (V. Dryakhlov, 2010).

Due to the presence of Alaric forces near Rome, the Roman Senate proclaimed the alternative emperor (M. Arnheim, 1972)—the puppet of the Greek Priscus Attalus²¹—the prefect of the city of Rome. Since the emperor had reached maturity by this time, he most likely took part in these events. It is also fair to blame the breakdown of negotiations with Alaric, which led to the capture of Rome, on his stubbornness, although in general he had a supple and gentle character (A. Cameron, 2011). Perhaps Alaric was right in assuming that Honorius was behind the treacherous attack on him that led to the cessation of negotiations.

When Honorius was informed of the fall of Rome, he allegedly did not understand this and thought that his favorite cock, nicknamed Rome, had been slain.

Yes, I've just fed him, he exclaimed.²²

The capture of Rome, which came as a shock, a catastrophe for contemporaries and eye-witnesses, was not of such fundamental importance for Honorius: the emperor calmly spent his days in Ravenna, while Alaric, and then Athaulf, fought with usurpers (P. Booth, 2013).

The son of Athaulf and Galla Placidia, named by Theodosius in honor of his grandfather could, in retrospect, have been proclaimed the king of the Visigoths and stood at the same time at the head of the Roman Empire, but the child died a few months

²⁰ Oros., VII, 42, 2.

²¹ Id., VII, 42, 7.

²² Proc., BV, 1.

later. The name Theodosius also contains a demonstrative allusion to the pro-Goth politics of Theodosius I, whom the historian Jordan called “a friend of the world and ready”.²³

In view of the childlessness of Honorius and his divorce, such hopes were not at all groundless. In 417, Honorius gave his sister Galla Placidia in marriage to Constantius. In 419 his son—the future emperor Valentinian III was born (W. Liebeschuetz, 2001).

The state received many serious wounds during the reign of Honorius.²⁴

In particular, the army of the Western Empire lost at least half of its composition in various military failures, and maybe most in two of them. The emperor’s personal contribution to the development of events was completely insignificant.

The identity of Honorius and the features of his character and politics, are a special historiographic question, since the conviction of the emperor’s intellectual disability was formed from the 18th century, which, in turn, predetermined the dominance of an idea that postulated the puppet character of a ruler who meekly obeyed the omnipotent Stilicho (W. Liebeschuetz, 2001).

The image of Honorius, who began his reign as a child, was emphasized and hyperbolized by Claudian in the text of the panegyrics and also caused condemnation among a number of secular authors who assigned Honorius a clearly insignificant role in their narrative. He did not become the emperor-reformer, but he was a charismatic figure and personified the legitimate authority and Eternal Rome. He also participated in determining the barbarian policy of the West and proved to be the heir to his father in the blow to the religious policy of the state. The importance of Honorius is reflected in those poems as a combination of the real Stilicho’s power and the sacredness of the emperor.

The logical result of the choice made by Honorius was the capture of the “eternal city” by the barbarians and the collapse of the once powerful empire. The fall of Rome in 410 was perceived by contemporaries as the end of the world, but this event was not directly related to the death of the empire, which is an excellent illustration of the changes that occurred in the minds of the people of the 5th century (W. Ball, 2007).

²³ Get., II, 2.

²⁴ Phil., XII, 10.

The Romans continued to perceive the Empire as a basic value; however, unlike previous periods, the very concept of “Romans” changed: now the Romans were numerous children born into mixed marriages, applying for citizenship, on the basis of the laws of Caracalla, as well as barbaric commanders and grunts hired by the East or the West to protect their possessions or to confront their own kind. This led to the loss of the connection between Rome (only the inhabitants of which were citizens for a long time) and the Empire, the gradual loss and abolition of the traditions of past eras and the fall of the emperor's authority: starting with Honorius, military regents of the West came to the fore.

LATE ANTIQUE NOBLES IN THE STRUCTURE OF THE CHRISTIAN CLERGY: MENTAL INVERSION AS A MARKER OF TRANSITIONAL TIME

ELENA LITOVCHENKO

In the history of Late Antiquity, the period between the fourth and sixth centuries became a turning point characterized by changes in cultural and historical paradigms, and the specifics of the worldview, which reflected an unstable balance between the “old” and the “new”. In the context of the structural crisis affecting all sides of life, unique processes began in the sociocultural sphere, that testify to the formation of a new type of personality, examples of which can be representatives of the higher social stratum of the fourth–sixth centuries, “re-qualified” from the imperial servants to the Church ministers. First of all, we are interested in the motivation for these actions, which often determined the degree of Christian zeal at the episcopal office.

We believe that serious changes occurred in the minds of most of the Late Antique bishops known to us, for the expression of which we propose to use the term “mental inversion”. This category can be used to denote the “refocusing” of human consciousness in the perception of the same object of reality, as a result of which, the observer’s subjective perception of the familiar picture is reversed. The reasons for the inversion depend both on the dynamics of social processes and on personal circumstances: life’s hardships (death of near and dear ones), the influence of relatives and friends, could hasten the intellectual paradigm shift of Late Antique society.

As a rule, such processes are typical for transition periods like Late Antiquity. It is the unsteady nature of the processes taking place in the Mediterranean world in the fourth–sixth centuries that allowed historians to differentiate this era, considering it as an independent stage of historical and cultural evolution and attractive

for its coverage of the sources, which rightfully include the so-called “ego-documents” which give historical evidence a personal character.

The argument is based on the biographical method and the hermeneutic interpretation of personal texts, in order to identify the genuine thoughts and feelings of the authors, as far as possible.

As the subject of our study, we identified one of the aspects of mental inversion related to the transformation of religious consciousness, in which representatives of the privileged class of the Late Antique society abandoned old pagan beliefs in favor of Christian doctrine. This process is directly linked to the subsequent rejection of secular posts for the finding of the episcopal see. It is clear that the educated people who were able to influence the consciousness of the flock were suitable for the role of a spiritual shepherd; therefore, we are talking about representatives of nobility, who received rhetorical education, the best at that time. Rhetorical education was one of the factors that determined the particular worldview of the Late Antique aristocracy in the fourth–sixth centuries. It also predetermined the features, form and content of the literary work of Christian writers, their habits, views and values. It was at this time that a peculiar program aimed at preserving the ancient culture in general, and a high level of education in particular was laid down in their minds (D.V. Buyarov, 2009: 41).

Late Antique sermon and Christian mentoring became new ways of self-expression for graduates of rhetorical schools, providing a bishop's throne instead of the orator's rostrum for the manifestation of their eloquence. Thus, *eloquentia*, as a distinctive quality of Late Antique nobles, continued to be appreciated in society, preserving its rhetorical canons, but the field for its application had changed.

The decision to choose not just the Christian faith, but often the ascetic life, lies in purely personal internal reasons. It is individual for each and not everyone decided on such a radical transformation in their own way of life. However, the foundations of upbringing laid down in childhood, moral values, cultural traditions, as well as the skills acquired at school, remain with a person for life. The cardinal difference between the origin, social status and lifestyle in childhood and adolescence, on the one hand, and moral principles and lifestyle in adulthood, on the other hand, often generated an

identity crisis among those nobles who did not have enough flexible thinking to form in their minds a synthesis of the old and the new.¹

Taking into account socio-economic factors, some researchers deem that it was often material considerations that became the basis for the adoption of the bishop's throne by representatives of the higher social stratum of the Late Antique society, since the funds intended earlier for the maintenance of the priestly colleges since the reign of Constantine the Great were redirected to the needs of the Christian church, to which generous private donations were also added (M. Vedeshkin, 2014: 95–96). The church as a subject of legal relations was granted a number of social and economic privileges, which made church service very attractive for many groups of the Roman society.

Among other justifications, the point of view of H. Drake considering the Church as only one of the “corporations” competing on the fourth-century market of personal religions, should not be overlooked. His idea based on this market analogy is shared by H.G. Ziche, who writes: “...it could be argued that, while Christianity is not selling a significantly superior product, it does so using a superior system of corporate governance” and “The Church <...> is definitely more an institution than a cult, and joining it is not primarily a religious choice” (H. Drake, 2005: 5–6; H. Ziche, 2014: 352).

We believe that among the material grounds for the adoption of the ecclesiastical office, there were also representations related primarily to the position of the landowner. Peter Heather considers that the land was a confirmation of the high status of the Late Antique aristocrat, which is why in order to preserve their possessions, they compromised with the barbarian rulers (P. Heather, 2005: 422). This argument also seems to be a good justification for the motive for choosing the highest Church post of the region. Thus, it seems to us that, despite the organization of resistance to Euric, Sidonius (c. 430–c. 486) preserved his life and possessions not only thanks to his literary talents, writing a panegyric in honor of Euric, but also because he represented the

¹ We consider Paulinus of Nola as an example of a sharp mental revolution, although W. Frend once believed that Paulinus did not experience any acute crisis of faith like the “Augustinian” one, gradually abandoning “Ausonius’ views” (W. Frend, 1969: 4). However, the fact of refusal is important for us, since Sidonius for instance found the opportunity to accept the new worldview without breaking up with the old one.

highest spiritual authority in the region. *Vir inlustris* Eucherius of Bourges, who, like Sidonius, supported the imperial government until the end,² was first imprisoned and then executed in Clermont in the late 470s.³ In a similar situation, Sidonius was forgiven, apparently, not least, due to his status as a bishop. An indirect confirmation of this can be the fact that Eucherius also tried, like many Late Roman aristocrats, to get this post (in Bourges in 470), but failed⁴ (see R. Mathisen, 1984: 159–170).

Thus, financial interest alone could not be the basis for the adoption of dignity by representatives of the senatorial aristocracy, who hardly needed additional funds; they sought to preserve their possessions rather than to increase them. Moreover, some of them voluntarily abandoned their assets in favor of the community in order to turn to a pure evangelical way of life (as done by Paulinus of Nola).

The representatives of the community often asked wealthy people to take spiritual leadership, hoping for a similar outcome: when Paulinus of Nola (c. 354–431) lived for some time near Barcelona (394), the local flock demanded his ordination as presbyter,⁵ expecting that they would receive a significant profit from the sale of his estate, which would follow the assumption of office. Then Paulinus refused as he did later in his much-loved Nola.

The same incident occurred with Pinianus, a husband of Melania the Younger: having lost two children who died in infancy, the couple decided to completely devote themselves to religion, and Pinianus became a priest in Hippo in 410 or 411, largely due to his vast wealth.⁶

Another example of the election of an aristocrat to the post of bishop is given by Synesius from Cyrene (c. 370–c. 412), and this is an even more cardinal option, since a bishop's throne was offered to him at a time when he was not even baptized. This happened in 410, either simultaneously with the adoption of the dignity, or immediately afterwards (for a discussion of the date of the adoption of the episcopal dignity and Christianity by Synesius, see J. Bregman, 1982, T. Barnes, 1986). In a letter to his brother Evoptius, Synesius writes about his thoughts and doubts, his refusal to leave

² Sid. Ep., 3, 8.

³ Greg. Tur. Hist. Franc., 2, 20.

⁴ Sid. Ep., 7, 9, 18.

⁵ Paul. Nol. Ep., 3, 4.

⁶ Aug. Epp., 125, 126.

his wife, about subsequent plans for the birth of children.⁷ As a graduate of the Alexandrian school, Synesius was first of all, attracted by Christianity for the opportunity to philosophize, and it is not known where his Christian path would have led, how sincerely his worship would have been, if he had not lost all three sons one by one. As we know in the case of Paulinus of Nola and Pinianus, this led to their complete consecration to God.

The rise of the representatives of the Christian clergy to the level of secular judges and magistrates also had consequences. The Christian church began to be regarded as one of the state institutions. This aspect is considered as the “pragmatic” component of episcopal authority (C. Rapp, 2005: 23). The imperial administration often used church leaders in diplomatic missions (for example, two embassies of Julius Nepos to the Visigoth king Euric in 474–475 consisted of four Gallic bishops—Leontius of Arles, Graecus of Marseilles, Faustus of Riez, and Basilius, bishop of Aix⁸—and another of Epiphanius, bishop of Pavia).⁹ That is, the bishopric in Late Antiquity became a way to confirm the high social status manifested, *inter alia*, in the possession of extensive power. However, since this power was implemented in new conditions, in the minds of the noblemen, serious changes leading to a sincere belief in Christ had to take place.

Sidonius Apollinaris, who belonged to a senatorial family (his father and grandfather were praetorian prefects of Gaul, and his wife was the daughter of Emperor Avitus), had in his arsenal the honorary position of the prefect of Rome, which in the ancient Roman *cursus honorum* was counted as its peak.

For a long time, Sidonius remained committed to an aristocratic way of life and turned to the Church quite late, but for him the Church was not only a new institution where special privileges could be obtained, but also a center for preserving Roman culture in times of crisis, as well as the opportunity to realize his creative abilities.

Sidonius corresponded with many bishops and priests, expressed his respect and new views to them, as in a letter to Patiens:

⁷ Syn. Ep., 105.

⁸ Sid. Ep., 7, 6–7.

⁹ Ennod. Vita Epiph., 80–91.