

AMMIANUS MARCELLINUS AND THE ANGER OF JULIAN

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Introduction

The *Res Gestae* of Ammianus Marcellinus (c. 330-395) provides, amongst historical facts, exhaustive accounts of battles and sieges, literary topoi and a complex historiography, including a detailed account of the emotional reactions of emperors and the effects of these emotions upon their subjects. Although anger plays a significant role in the life of Julian,¹ it has often been the position of modern scholars to focus on the positive portrayal of Julian in the historian's accounts.² For example, Axel Brandt in 1999 pointed out the praise Ammianus infused into his descriptions of the actions of Julian, using such terms as *prudencia* and *temperantia*.³ Roger Blockley in 1994 pointed out the *exempla* that the historian used throughout the *Res Gestae* often to emphasise virtues and vices in his far-reaching portrayals of characters and events. He revealed that in twenty-nine places these *exempla* were used to characterise Julian in a positive light, and only two were negative.⁴ However, as Thompson in 1943, and Rosen in 1978 discussed,⁵ it is important to recognise that negative judgements from Ammianus on Julian are apparent, even as early as Book 21, where his severe military actions are criticised.⁶

To recognise a change in perceptions is useful for critiquing the style of the historian. A study into the emotional changes of Julian as affecting the historical portrait from his narrator has not yet been attempted, and is a gap that this paper hopes to fill. The purpose of this study then is to explore the way in which anger was used to strengthen and validate the portrait of Julian in the narrative history of Ammianus Marcellinus. The usefulness of such a study is furthered through

1 At A.M. 16.4.2; 16.11.8; 17.10.8; 20.4.15; 22.13.2; 22.14.2; 22.14.3; 23.2.4; 24.3.2; 24.3.3; 24.5.6; 24.5.7; 24.5.10; 24.6.17; 25.1.8.

2 See especially R.C. Blockley, *Ammianus Marcellinus: A Study of his Historiography and Political Thought* (Collection Latomus 141, Bruxelles 1975), 73-103; T.G. Elliott, *Ammianus Marcellinus and Fourth Century History* (Sarasota 1983), 69-134.

3 See Chapter Three of A. Brandt, *Moralische Werte in den Res Gestae des Ammianus Marcellinus* (Göttingen 1999) for a complete list.

4 R.C. Blockley, 'Ammianus Marcellinus's Use of Exempla', *Florilegium* 13 (1994), 53-64, at 56. A.M. 25.4.17: Julian's excessive superstition and his over-enthusiastic sacrifices.

5 E.A. Thompson, 'Ammianus' Account of Gallus Caesar', *AJP* 64 (1943), 302-15, and K. Rosen, *La méthode d'Ammien Marcellin* (Paris 1978), 421, who sees Ammianus' use of the term *defectio* (21.5.1) in regards to Julian as a part of his increasing criticism of the young emperor.

6 J. Den Boeft, D. Den Hengst, H.C. Teitler, *Philological and Historical Commentary on Ammianus Marcellinus XXI* (Groningen 1991), vii, 51. Indeed, such criticisms can arouse 'great surprise' when they are suddenly interspersed in accounts of Julian's 'foresight', 'growing confidence', etc (72). Ammianus (21.5.13) writes: *his Iulianus, ut poscebat negotii magnitudo, praestructis expertus, quid in rebus tumultuosis anteuersio ualeat et praegressus, per tesseram edicto itinere in Pannonias, castris promotis et signis temere se fortunae commisit ambiguae*. The historian's suggestion here is that Julian's decision to march against Constantius was rash and taken without due consideration. This interpretation is argued against by J.C. Rolfe, *Ammianus Marcellinus Vol. II* (Cambridge MA and London 1940) 116 n.1; and Hamilton's translation conveys no negative language (W. Hamilton, *The Later Roman Empire [AD 354-378]*, Harmondsworth 1986, 214).

its attention to detail, and by adding to the existing scholarship, through presenting to the readership a rather neglected dimension in Ammianus' portrayals. Thus the intention of this study is to exploit a rather rich ground for understanding the rhetorical approach of Ammianus through his direct portrayals.

Historians in antiquity were well aware of the effects emotion had on their subjects, and used reports of these sometimes imputed reactions to portray their characters in both positive and negative ways. Anger was an important subject for debate in all the foremost philosophical schools. There were many treatises on anger in ancient times; works known by title include those by Philip of Opus, Antipater, Posidonius, Plutarch, Sotion (the teacher of Seneca), Bion of Borysthenes and Melanthius of Rhodes. The surviving works are Philodemus, *On Anger*; Seneca, *On Anger*; Plutarch, *On Freedom from Anger*; Libanius, *On the Control of Anger*; Gregory of Nazianzus, *Against Anger*; and Lactantius, *On the Anger of God*. At some point in their works, all of these authors discuss anger control. Anger elicits all sorts of responses from the angered and from those directly and indirectly affected by the expression of it. Today the study of emotions is a vigorous field of research. In recent years, the passions in ancient sources have been studied by classicists such as Martha Nussbaum, David Konstan and Susanna Braund, who in 2003 called for examinations such as these:

It is our hope that our publication, taken together with that of Harris, will set a new agenda for the study of ancient anger and will provoke and inspire work by many other scholars both within and beyond the field of classics.⁷

This paper therefore owes a debt to these forerunners, and this research aims to contribute to a greater depth of understanding of the role of the key emotion of anger within the character of Julian, as portrayed by Ammianus, and how he uses anger to influence the reader and colour his portrayal of this emperor. In order to conduct this study into the anger of the Emperor Julian, instances of key words that denoted this figure's anger were collected from a lexicon and thereby a sample was created. Making the study keyword-based reduced the need to make (possibly erroneous) inferences about whether it was really anger or some related emotion that was present in Ammianus' narrative. The next step was to examine the references to ascertain what the cause and, if present, manifestation was, what the consequences were for those involved, both directly and indirectly, and how in particular Ammianus chose to portray the actual event. Results from this content analysis are tabulated in the Appendix (see p.74 below).

⁷ S. Braund and G.W. Most, *Ancient Anger: Perspectives from Homer to Galen*, YCS 32 (Cambridge and New York 2003), 3. For further reading on the emotions in classics, see for example: J. Brunschwig and M.C. Nussbaum (eds.), *Passions and Perceptions: Studies in Hellenistic Philosophy of Mind. Proceedings of the Fifth Symposium Hellenisticum* (Cambridge 1993); M.C. Nussbaum, *The Therapy of Desire: Theory and Practice in Hellenistic Ethics* (Princeton 1994); ead., *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions* (Cambridge, 2001); D. Konstan, *Sexual Symmetry: Love in the Ancient Novel and Related Genres* (Princeton 1994); id., *Friendship in the Classical World* (Cambridge 1997); id., *Pity Transformed* (London 2001); id. and N.K. Rutter (eds.), *Envy, Spite, and Jealousy: The Rivalrous Emotions in Ancient Greece* (Edinburgh 2003); S. Braund and C. Gill (eds.), *The Passions in Roman Thought and Literature* (Cambridge and New York 1997); S. Braund, *Beyond Anger: A Study of Juvenal's Third Book of Satires* (Cambridge 1988); W.V. Harris, *Restraining Rage: The Ideology of Anger Control in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge MA 2001).

To understand anger, its cause and effects, and how it manifests in Ammianus' narrative, it is necessary first to identify and discuss the anger words used by Ammianus. Ammianus incorporates a variety of terms that indicate anger, such as *ira*, *irascor*, *effero* and *indignatio*, to name but a few. *Indignatio* had, for rhetorical theorists, an emotional power in oratory, and rousing the *indignatio* of an audience was a powerful rhetorical device. Careful colouring and structuring with just the right emphasis meant that the purposeful vividness of historiographic accounts, such as Ammianus' *Res Gestae*, led the intended audience into having no recourse but to respond emotionally. We cannot know precisely what the author felt, but through his accounts we can respond vicariously to the emotions that he transmitted and appeared personally to feel. Thus his words in the original Latin, such as the term *indignatio*, would have been chosen carefully to grab his audience's attention and make them feel the way that he wanted them to feel; emotions helped represent to them the rhetorical 'truth' of the author's perceptions. Thus the awareness of the emotional impact of certain terms led Ammianus to incorporate them into his *Res Gestae*, in order to give his work a wider emotional impact; thus some references to anger must be an inevitable part of the historical record.

That the characters within the *Res Gestae* are constructs of Ammianus is true to a certain extent, in that he brings historical figures to life in a way that often resembles a novel. Their passions are brought forth through a combination of Ammianus' own internalisation—i.e. the long-term process of consolidating and embedding one's own beliefs, attitudes and values when it comes to moral behaviour⁸—and projection—i.e. a defence mechanism in which an individual projects his or her own unpleasant feelings on to someone else, and blames them for having thoughts that in fact are those of the individual him/herself.⁹ For Ammianus, like Tacitus, professed to be able to see into the very thoughts of individuals, some of whom he knew personally; individuals who both controlled and were at times controlled by their anger. The emperor Julian—whom scholars generally agree that Ammianus treated as the epitome of what an Augustus should be—was, in particular, an important means for conveying the complex milieu of emotion that naturally affected all rulers. Anger brings forth all sorts of responses from the angered and from those directly and indirectly affected by this often extremely powerful emotion.

Virtues, such as the ability to restrain one's anger, were, for a ruler, a theme explored by philosophers and historians throughout the ages. The traditional belief that a ruler should restrain his anger was still an important aspect of political instruction in the fourth century.¹⁰ During the period of the fourth century in which Ammianus lived and wrote, there remained a concern with virtues as displayed by the emperors. We have strong evidence for this in the panegyric texts from Eusebius, Julian, Themistius, Libanius (Libanius' *Oration* 16 is called, *To the Antiochenes*:

8 E.g. W.W. Meissner, *Internalization in Psychoanalysis* (New York 1981), and R. Schafer, *Aspects of Internalization* (Madison CT 1990).

9 For this field of enquiry, see for example the collection in J. Sandler (ed.), *Projection, Identification, Projective Identification* (Madison CT 1987) and P. Cramer, *Protecting the Self: Defense Mechanisms in Action* (New York and London 2006).

10 Cf. Harris (n.7 above), 261.

On the Emperor's Anger), Symmachus, Ambrose, Synesius and Claudian. However, in much of their writings, the notion of anger control is replaced with gentleness and philanthropy. The emperor must be 'noble, wise, brave, dignified, kind, merciful, just, devoted to his people, chaste in his private life, moderate, generous, truthful, prudent, self-restrained, modest'; however, 'the emperor's control over his anger is rather conspicuously absent from the Latin prose panegyrics'.¹¹ When we are reading the works of Ammianus, a contemporary of these other writers, who would certainly be familiar with at least some of their works, we are able to see how he builds upon this slightly altered ideology. Our historian becomes most concerned by the excesses of anger when it is shown by an emperor, but he never goes to the extremes of Seneca with his significant political purpose in mind, and does not write a default piece on the necessity of controlling one's emotions; Ammianus is far more subtle than that. He does not go as far as the panegyrists either, for his Julian is undeniably flawed. One of the purposes of the *Res Gestae* is to demonstrate the inherent dangers that anger can create and lead to. According to Seager, in Ammianus

[a]nger is almost always condemned as proof of a lack or loss of self-control, which may cloud a man's judgement and inspire him to unsound action.... It is recorded almost always when indulged in by supposedly civilized men, especially emperors, who more than others should be capable of controlling themselves. It is a glorious achievement, Ammianus says, if powerful men conquer their desire to do harm, to act cruelly, and to give way to anger (21.16.14).¹²

Julian in Gaul

It is not surprising that Ammianus should present Julian so positively from the beginning of his career as Caesar in Gaul, after he was appointed to that post by the emperor Constantius II due to concern for the way in which Gaul was being continually invaded by barbarians.¹³ The young man with Hellenic¹⁴ tendencies encompassed all that Ammianus found admirable, and was in direct contrast with Constantius, for whom his positive comments are few. This, then, explains much of Ammianus' rhetorical language in his descriptions of Julian, as the young Caesar overcame all obstacles that Constantius and his supporters allegedly placed in his way in order to discredit him.¹⁵

When stationed in Gaul Julian spent much of his time campaigning along the Rhine, securing Roman-held centres from the Alamanni. However, in 356, when Julian was wintering in the town

11 Harris (n.7) above, 257f.

12 R. Seager, *Ammianus Marcellinus: Seven Studies in His Language and Thought* (Columbia MO 1986), 34.

13 R. Seager, 'Roman Policy on the Rhine and the Danube in Ammianus', *CQ* 49 (1999) 579-605, at 587. On Julian as merely a figurehead, see Libanius, *Or.* 18.42f.; Eunapius, fr. 16.2; Julian, *Ep. Ath.* 277D-78A.

14 On Julian's Hellenism, see G. Downey, 'Julian the Apostate at Antioch', *ChHist* 8 (1939), 303-15; S. Bradbury, 'Julian's Pagan Revival and the Decline of Blood Sacrifice', *Phoenix* 49 (1995), 331-56.

15 Cf. the claim in Ammianus (17.9.7) that Constantius was deliberately starving Julian of funds. Of this Seager (n.13 above), 591, writes, 'his (Ammianus') alleged proof is hardly convincing'.

of Sens, the Alamanni unexpectedly besieged him for over a month. He became furious (*ira exundante*), as he was not able to sally forth effectively, due to not being provided with an adequate number of troops (A.M. 16.4.2). Indeed, this situation was made even worse, as Marcellus, the *magister equitum*, was in a position to lift the siege, but deliberately did not send in reinforcements, although he was aware that Julian's situation was critical (A.M. 16.4.3). Ammianus asserts that Constantius meant for Julian to fail in the West, for he did not provide adequate supplies for Julian's troops and had his officers deliberately withdraw their help. Constantius also purportedly sent his *notarius* Gaudentius to spy on Julian in Gaul, and report on his conduct (Sym. 10.49). Thus, for Ammianus, Julian's anger was understandable at these moments. However, the historian (16.7.1-4) does admit that when Constantius learnt of Marcellus' behaviour he had him discharged from the army.¹⁶

Julian was also inhibited in his actions by another alleged accessory of Constantius, the *magister peditum* Barbatio (A.M. 16.11.1-17.2.4).¹⁷ He, along with his troops, had also been sent to Gaul by the emperor, and it appears that he and Julian were meant to launch independent attacks upon the Alamanni.¹⁸ Ammianus describes the events surrounding Barbatio's year in Gaul (AD 357) as detrimental to the military pursuits of the young Caesar, leading Ammianus twice to refer to the general as a coward (16.11.7; 17.6.2).¹⁹ For example, when Julian was securing the Roman held lands along the Rhine, the Alamanni impetuously moved into that area and were so incautious as to hurl abuse at the Caesar. Roused (*percitus*), Julian sought to follow them across the Rhine, but Ammianus writes that Barbatio deliberately had the bridge of boats burnt so that Julian's men could not achieve this, and therefore not gain glory from such a tactic (16.11.8). The importance that Ammianus attaches, not just to the righteous anger of Julian here, but to the limitations placed on him by fellow officers, suggests that he was far more capable in the field than Constantius could ever have expected.

Julian's anger is also positively portrayed by Ammianus as he dealt with fierce outbreaks of barbarians during his assignment in Gaul. Carefully managed anger towards the Alamanni was evident in much of his dealings, and this was used effectively to intimidate and control these groups who were often unmanageable. A direct reference is made by Ammianus at 17.10.8, when Julian was indignant (*indignationem*) at one of the kings of the Alamanni, Hortarius, when he only gave back a few of his captives.²⁰ In response, Julian took hostages until the king restored all the prisoners. In the end they reached a peaceable conclusion, and in return Hortarius had to supply the Romans with building materials. This incident neatly reveals how Julian effectively reduced 'the arrogant to submission' (17.10.10),²¹ and how anger could be effectively used to induce fear in suppliants.

It is unclear whether the usurpation of Julian in 360 was a carefully staged event; and it still creates scholarly debate even today as to whether it was forced upon him or was a premeditated act in a dangerous attempt to assume the imperial power for himself, so that the anger he exhib-

16 Cf. Julian, *Ep. ad Ath.* 278B; Libanius, *Or.* 18.48.

17 Cf. Seager (n.13 above), 588.

18 D. Woods, 'The Fate of the Magister Equitum Marcellus', *CQ* 45 (1995), 266-68, at 266.

19 Cf. Woods (n.18 above), 267.

20 The text is uncertain here, but this is the general sense, see Seager (n.13 above), 591 n.67.

21 Cf. Seager (n.13 above), 591.

ited was a necessity in order to disguise his own responsibility for this situation.²² In fact, prior to this, after the battle at Argentoratum against the Alamanni in 357, Julian had been acclaimed Augustus by the army (A.M. 16.12.64). On that occasion Julian had rebuked and rejected the soldiers' proclamation with a display of anger (*petulantius milites increpabat*); for the victory, coupled with this display of loyalty by the soldiers, would have been seen by Constantius as an immediate threat and a possible cause for civil war.²³ Following that precedent, in 360, Julian again became angry (*indignari semet ostendens*—the phrase could suggest either real or feigned anger) with the army for successfully forcing him to assume the emperorship against his will (A.M. 20.4.15).²⁴ It was said that these soldiers themselves were angry at the demands of Constantius to send them to the foreign lands in the east, away from their families.²⁵ Julian had promised not to send them and it was alleged that through their fear of relocation and admiration for the Caesar that they acclaimed him at Paris.²⁶ However, as Bowersock points out, Eutropius wrote nine years after the event that this took place *consensu militum*, suggesting that the inspiration did not in fact come from the soldiers.²⁷

When one considers the context it is not unexpected that Julian should have made the proclamation, and as Matthews states, 'the surprise would rather have been had it not come about',²⁸ so that any displeasure or anger was merely a front.²⁹ What also suggests that this was a carefully staged usurpation was that Julian did not go away at the outset and think about what had occurred before allowing himself to be proclaimed Augustus. Ammianus makes it clear that the Caesar had no advisors in this, although Julian himself writes that he did (A.M. 20.4.9; Julian, *Ep. Ad. Ath.* 283B-C). Nevertheless, the point remains that Julian did exhibit anger, real or staged, towards his troops—something that he later related to Constantius in order to demonstrate that the soldiers forced his hand.³⁰ In actuality, it would have been dangerous for Julian to refuse his soldiers the

22 See for example A. Selem, 'L'atteggiamento storiografico di Ammiano nei confronti di Giuliano dalla proclamazione di Parigi alla morte di Costanzo', *Athenaeum* 49 (1971), 89-107; J. F. Drinkwater, 'The "Pagan Underground", Constantius II's "Secret Service", and the Survival, and the Usurpation of Julian the Apostate', *Latomus* 180 (1983), 348-87; M.F. Williams, 'Four Mutinies: Tacitus "Annals" 1.16-30; 1.31-49 and Ammianus Marcellinus "Res Gestae" 20.4.9-20.5.7; 24.3.1-8', *Phoenix* 51 (1997), 44-74, at 61. J. Matthews, *The Roman Empire of Ammianus* (London 1989), 93, wrote of the usurpation that 'the surprise would rather have been had it not come about'. There is therefore the notion that any displeasure or anger was merely a front. Cf. T.D. Barnes, *Ammianus Marcellinus and the Representation of Historical Reality* (Ithaca NY 1998), 155; G.W. Bowersock, *Julian the Apostate* (London 1978), 49-51.

23 A threat, which, incidentally, never disappeared. Cf. Matthews (n.22 above), 92.

24 Other historians who describe how Julian became emperor are Lib. *Or.* 12.59, 13.33, 18.97; Julian, *Ep. Ad Ath.* 283-284C; Zos. 3.9.1-2; Eunap. *VS* 7.3.8.

25 J. Szidat, *Historischer Kommentar zu Ammianus Marcellinus Buch XX-XXI* (Wiesbaden 1979), 65-74, and others suggest that this was a long-standing strategy of Constantius, rather than a direct measure against Julian. D. Woods, 'Ammianus and some Tribuni Scholarum Palatarum c. A.D. 353-64', *CQ* 47 (1997), 269-91, at 274, disagrees that the desire to remain in Gaul was the chief motivation for the revolt for a part of the auxiliaries, as the majority of the *scutarii* and *gentiles* were elite troops, recruited from throughout the empire and thus had no loyalty to Gaul.

26 On the events leading up to the acclamation at Paris, see Woods (n.25 above), 273f.

27 Eutropius 10.16; Bowersock (n.22 above), 47.

28 Matthews (n.22 above), 93.

29 Cf. Barnes (n.22 above), 155; Bowersock (n.22 above), 49-51; Zosimus 3.9.

30 Ammianus recorded the content of the letter from Julian to Constantius at 20.8.

title they were forcing on him (if that really were the case), for it may have incited their own anger towards him if they felt that they were not being rewarded for their support, and thus he would have feared for his life. In fact, Libanius (*Or.* 18.98-99) reported that the soldiers broke into the palace, seized Julian, dragged him to a platform and crowned him. Ammianus supports the usurpation of Julian, soundly and thoroughly, and his language is full of rhetorical devices, from his presentation of the Gallic forces to the repetition of the letter Julian sent to Constantius,³¹ explaining the reasons for his accession. To read Ammianus' account of events though, one would think that Julian was merely the political tool of the collective force of his angered troops.

Against all the odds Julian was actually successful in Gaul, delivering far more than Constantius could have dreamed. In the end, he overcame 'a conspicuous lack of support and actual sabotage by the emperor and his creatures and the weakness and cantankerous temper of his army'.³²

Julian in Antioch

Antioch was for Julian a place in which he was confident that his Hellenism would be readily accepted, for this cosmopolitan city epitomised for him a centre of culture and learning on the scale of Alexandria. This city still retained its pagan shrines, and was home to Libanius, whose lectures on the old traditions had certainly made an impact on the young Julian at Nicomedia.³³ However, it was also here in Antioch that Julian's reforms were put to the greatest test, and were not received in the manner that the new Augustus had optimistically anticipated.

It was Julian's sincere hope and strong belief that the Antiochenes would actively embrace paganism along with the reinstatement of sacrifices and worship of the old gods. However, according to Ammianus at 22.13.2, certain incidents made it clear to Julian that Christianity was a prevalent and growing force in Antioch. For example in 363 the temple of Apollo, situated in Daphne, a suburb of Antioch, was burnt down. The inference that Julian drew was that the Christians deliberately burnt down the temple in retribution for the expense Julian was paying towards pagan shrines,³⁴ as opposed to supporting Christian places of worship.³⁵ As a consequence for the Christians, the greater church (*maiolem ecclesiam*) at Antioch was ordered to be closed. Through the expression of hostile anger (*ira*), Julian ordered 'stricter investigations than usual' to be made. Though the emperor may have sensed his response as being righteously angry (as he probably did on all occasions of his anger), it is possible that his anger was not justified, for Ammianus does reveal that it was conceivable, though based on *rumore leuissimo*, that some tapers were left

31 Cf. Julian's *Letter to the Senate and People of Athens*, in which he gives an account of his accession to the citizens of Athens (where he had attended university) in order to defend his actions. However, Downey (n.14 above), 313, claims that this letter was actually intended 'to turn public opinion against Constantius'.

32 Seager (n.13 above), 594.

33 Downey (n.14 above), 306.

34 Cf. Matthews (n.22 above), 112, for the causal separation by Ammianus of the restoration and destruction of the temple.

35 For a good overview on the fire, especially what it meant to Sapor I, see A.D. Nock, 'Sapor I and the Apollo of Bryaxis', *AJA* 66 (1962), 307-10.

alight accidentally by the elderly philosopher Asclepiades, which might consequently have sparked the woodwork and thus burnt down the entire building (22.13.3).³⁶ Nevertheless, his perceptions of the Christians and their behaviour towards pagans meant that Julian had clearly judged them capable of such a deed. Consequently, and with a great deal of anger (*ira*), Julian himself wrote bitterly to the Antiochenes of the indifference of the Senate and stated that the god had left the shrine before the fire had occurred, for their neglect had made them unworthy of the god's care (*Mis.* 361B-C; 363A-C). After Julian's death Libanius (17.30; 2.218F) wrote, 'This then was the meaning of the destruction by fire of Apollo's temple; the god left earth, which was about to be defiled.'³⁷ Christian writers responded to this by stating that the fire was divine retribution for Julian's desire to revive worship of the god Apollo.³⁸ However, Ammianus writes nothing further on this matter, so the outcome is not apparent. It is sufficient to show that when a group that already held reservations towards him for his renewal of the ancient traditional forms of worship pushed Julian, then he could submit them to reprisals. In the manner of his description of this incident, Ammianus nowhere suggests the cruelty and terror that characterised Constantius' conduct when he was investigating anti-Christian behaviour.³⁹ This was not the last time that Julian would vent his rage against the ungrateful citizens of Antioch.

In 363, during a corn-crisis, Ammianus reports that Julian raged (*saeuiens*) against the Senate at Antioch when it was pointed out that he could not lower the price of commodities at that time (22.14.2). As a supporter of the upper classes in Antioch who controlled the food supply into the city, Ammianus at this point removes himself from actively supporting the policy of Julian, as it seemed negatively to affect the social class he most identified with. Indeed, the measures that Julian was trying to introduce were understood to be a direct attack on the elite. Not surprisingly, Ammianus portrays Julian's policy as superfluous for he saw that it was a measure designed to increase his popularity (*popularitatis amore*, 22.14.1). Thus it seems that the historian saw the emperor's anger as not justified; for he never once mentions Julian's own economic accounts of the food supply, which Julian included in his *Misopogon*, though surely the historian would have read it.⁴⁰ Ammianus also does not acknowledge the failure of the rains leading to a bad harvest,

36 Cf. Matthews (n.22 above), 439f., for further discussion on the effects Julian had on the Christians in Antioch through the ecclesiastical sources, especially in relation to this incident. Indeed, Ammianus nowhere indicates that Julian actually decommissioned the church and confiscated its treasures.

37 Cf. Nock (n.35 above), 10: '(Libanius) did not, like Julian, assert or suggest that Christians were responsible for the fire'.

38 E.g. John. Chrys. *In S. Babylam*, 15 (PG 50.559).

39 Cf. Constantius' reaction at A.M. 19.12.5, when the emperor was highly concerned with petitions that were sent to him, which were meant for the oracle of Besa. Constantius responded to these accounts that were perhaps treasonable and anti-Christian in nature by seeking out those who were the proponents. On Constantius as a Christian emperor, see E.D. Hunt, 'Christians and Christianity in Ammianus Marcellinus', *CQ* 35 (1985), 186-200. Another incident of Julian's anger, though not recorded by Ammianus, occurred at the time of the fire in Daphne. Bishop Athanasius was ordered out of Alexandria as an 'enemy of the gods': the main motivation for Julian's anger against him was that he 'dared to baptize' pagan women from important families. See Julian's angry letter to the prefect of Egypt, *Ep.* 112 Bidez.

40 Cf. Matthews (n.22 above), 409-11. Ammianus was certainly a member of the curial class in Antioch, and his curial background is strongly suggested by his negative attitude towards Julian's policy of withdrawing some of the curiales' privileges (12.9.12 and 14.4.21). Cf. N. Lenski, *Failure of Empire: Valens and the Roman State in the Fourth Century A.D.* (Los Angeles and London 2002), 274f. For Ammianus' social status and class bias, see E.A. Thompson, *The Historical Work of Ammianus Marcel-*

which would have contributed significantly to this crisis, and to which Julian's *Misopogon* (359A) also refers.⁴¹ That these measures would have created financial hardship, if not for Ammianus, then at least for people he knew, especially within the curial class,⁴² must have influenced his decision in showing that this manoeuvre was purely to gain popularity for the emperor and to distract from his Persian campaign, which undoubtedly would have diverted much of the food resources in preparations for the military activity.⁴³

As a consequence of his anger towards his dissenters because of these and other reasons, Julian chose the rather extraordinary response of dressing down the Antiochenes through the writing of his *Misopogon* or *Beard-Hater*,⁴⁴ composed during the celebration of the Kalends in late January or early February 363.⁴⁵ In order to visually express his displeasure with the Antiochenes, this satire was put on display outside the imperial palace for the public to read.⁴⁶ The *Misopogon* was a lengthy treatise that has been described as 'an expression of the bitterest disappointment and rage',⁴⁷ and 'a work which might have been witty, but the bitterness of its angry and sensitive author overwhelmed his efforts at humour'.⁴⁸ It is the end of the *Misopogon* which is dominated by undisguised anger.⁴⁹ After writing this document, Julian underestimated the reaction of the populace, for Ammianus writes (22.14.2):

quocirca in eos deinceps *saeuiens* ut obtrectatores et contumaces uolumen composuit inuectium, quod Antiochense uel Misopogonem appellauit, probra ciuitatis infensa mente

linus (Cambridge 1947), 2ff., 81, 128ff.; R.A. Pack, 'Ammianus Marcellinus and the Curia of Antioch', *CP* 48 (1953), 80-85; K. Rosen, *Ammianus Marcellinus* (Darmstadt 1982), 15-22; Matthews (n.22) above, 78-80; T.D. Barnes, 'Literary Convention, Nostalgia and Reality in Ammianus Marcellinus', in G. Clarke (ed.), *Reading the Past in Late Antiquity* (Rushcutters Bay 1990), 62; C.W. Fornara, 'Studies in Ammianus Marcellinus, I: The Letter of Libanius and Ammianus' Connections with Antioch', *Historia* 41 (1992), 328-44, at 339-44.

- 41 Cf. Matthews (n.22 above), 110. On Julian's writing of the *Misopogon*, see M.W. Gleason, 'Festive Satire: Julian's *Misopogon* and the New Year at Antioch', *JRS* 76 (1986), 106-19. Downey (n.14 above), 310, called the writing of the *Misopogon* 'one of the most incredible things that a Roman emperor, supposed to be in his right senses, ever did'.
- 42 Julian (*Mis.* 368D) was convinced that supplies were still plentiful and prices were high because members of the higher classes were deliberately keeping back food from the people in order to raise prices.
- 43 Cf. Downey (n.14 above), 307: '(Antioch) had the additional advantage of being the natural centre for the organization of his expedition against the Persians.'
- 44 Cf. R. Browning, *The Emperor Julian* (London 1975), 158: 'The *Misopogon*'s purpose and meaning have been variously estimated.' Cf. Bowersock (n.22 above), 104; P. Athanassiadi, *Julian: An Intellectual Biography* (London 1992), 202.
- 45 Gleason (n.41 above), 108. For Ammianus' erroneous dating of the *Misopogon*, see Barnes (n.22 above), 51f.
- 46 Barnes (n.22 above), 51.
- 47 Downey (n.14 above), 309.
- 48 Bowersock (n.22 above), 13. Cf. R. Newbold, 'Ridicule, Insults and Abuse in Ammianus and Gregory of Tours', *JAC* 17 (2002), 39-57, at 50: 'For all its ironic self-disparagement, the *Misopogon* is full of bitter and petulant anger.'
- 49 E.g. 360D-361D, 364Bff., 366B-D. Ammianus himself was opposed to Julian's excesses in both superstition and sacrifices. At 25.4.17 he compares the emperor to both Hadrian and Marcus Aurelius, who shared the same traits.

dinumerans addensque ueritati conplura. post quae multa in se facete dicta conperiens coactus dissimulare pro tempore *ira sufflabatur interna*.⁵⁰

Although, as we discussed in the introduction, anger control in the fourth century was no longer prominent in political texts, Ammianus does make much of Julian concealing his wrath, for although the populace caricatured Julian, comparing him to a dwarf and a goat (due to his characteristic beard), and openly objected to the number of sacrifices he made to the gods, the emperor ‘held his peace, kept his temper under control, and went on with his solemnities’ (A.M. 22.14.3). Individuals react differently when placed in the public eye and when emotions get the better of them. Some behave like Tiberius who, unable to cope with the constant pressure from the Senate in particular, took to self-imposed exile. Others, such as Nero, took public life to the extreme and deliberately presented themselves to the populace, relishing all the attention, oblivious to any outside criticism. For Julian, neither was a suitable option, and his anger led him to react as only a man of his scholarly nature could, which was through the writing of a piece of literature meant to explain his position, and point out how much of a disappointment the citizens were to him.

For Julian, as someone who was in such an esteemed position, to be made the object of ridicule was an enormous insult. However, Ammianus does justify some of the Antiochenes’ jibes,⁵¹ and held the belief that the *Misopogon*’s objections were more punitive than he thought warranted: *probra ciuitatis infensa mente dinumerans, addensque ueritati complura* (22.14.2). The historian does not criticise Julian for the dissertation, which suggests that he perhaps believed that the Antiochenes were being unduly harsh towards the emperor. Ammianus does, however, point out Julian’s unwarranted behaviour on other occasions in Antioch, which the historian disapproved of: for example when Julian excitedly ran out of the Senate to greet Maximus (22.7.3), and when Julian carried the sacred standards, rather than letting the priests, for whom it was their sacred duty (22.14.3). Interestingly, Sozomen, the fifth century Christian historian, was in support of the dissertation, and wrote of Julian (*Hist. Eccl.* 5.19), ‘he suppressed his feelings of indignation and repaid their ridicule by words alone; he composed and sent to them a most excellent and elegant work under the title of *Beard Hater*’. Zosimus, the pagan historian who lived a short time after Julian, called it a ‘most polished composition’ (3.11.5). The second century Roman rhetorician Fronto (*Ep. ad Marc. Ant.* 2.7) was also in support of such devices, for he believed that emperors ought to ‘repress by their edicts the faults of provincials, give praise to good actions, quell the seditious and terrify the fierce ones. All these are assuredly things to be achieved by words and letters’. Libanius, in his *Epistles*, never once mentions the *Misopogon* definitively, although he

50 Cf. J. Den Boeft and J. Bremmer, ‘Notiunculae Martyrologicae V’, *VChr* 49 (1995), 242: ‘He gave vent to his fury at the obstinacy of his critics by composing a satire on them called the “Antiochian” or “Misopogon”, in which he enumerated the defects of the city in no friendly terms and in some respects went beyond the truth. They retaliated by circulating a number of jests at his expense which for the moment he had to pretend to take in good part, though in fact he was boiling with suppressed wrath.... Obviously the Antiochenes had hit the mark.’

51 At 14.2f. and 22.12.4. Cf. Thompson (n.40 above), 2; Newbold (n.48 above), 40.

does, in his sixteenth oration, attempt to argue against the dissertation in stages.⁵² The language and rhetorical devices of the piece would also have not failed to impress Ammianus.⁵³

Twice Ammianus gives us comments on Julian's anger which foreshadow his death; the manner of his language and hindsight are given over to this paradox. The first instance occurs at the time the emperor stormed out of Antioch on 5 March, 363 (23.2.4), furious (*ira*) at the citizens and their jibes⁵⁴ against him,⁵⁵ and promising never to return.⁵⁶ He swore to the delegates who escorted him from the city that he would spend the winter at Tarsus. Ammianus tells us that he did, but as a corpse rather than in the way Julian intended.⁵⁷ The second occurs, ominously, not long before Julian's death, when a bitter sign was described by Ammianus (24.6.17). This incident occurred on his Persian expedition, when Julian made a successful engagement outside Ctesiphon. In light of this success, Julian wanted to make an ample sacrifice to Mars Ultor. But of the ten bulls that were brought there nine fell dead before arriving at the altar; and the tenth broke its bonds and took much effort to control. When it had finally been sacrificed, the omens it gave were unfavourable.⁵⁸ At this sight Julian was seized by an attack of anger (*exclamauit indignatus*), and took Jupiter to witness that he would not sacrifice to Mars any more; this oath was not retracted because his death occurred very shortly thereafter.⁵⁹ Being deeply superstitious Julian clearly reacted out of fear and angst. For example, Ammianus (25.4.17) characterises the emperor as *superstitiosus magis quam sacrorum legitimus obseruator*. The knowledge that a bitter end

52 Harris (n.7 above), 258. Cf. Julian. *Ep.* 82.

53 Cf. Downey (n.14 above), 304: 'Julian was not the sort of man to win popularity with a licentious city: his assiduous performance of the pagan rites met with indifference, and his rough and unkempt personal appearance and his plain way of living aroused hostility and ridicule in a city which for centuries had been notorious for its disrespect towards its rulers. Finally, in the seventh month of his residence (January or February, 363), Julian vented his spleen in the famous satire, the *Misopogon* or *Beard-Hater*, in which, by pretending to satirise himself and the philosopher's beard which he wore in a clean-shaven age, he was able to pour forth his bitter anger against, and disappointment with, the people of Antioch.'

54 Compare the reaction of Constantius, who enjoyed the popular jokes made at his expense whilst attending the chariot races in Rome, A.M. 16.10.13. Compare also his decision to ignore the treatment of one of his statues at Edessa, when the citizens 'resenting some treatment they had received', whipped its bronze backside; '[Constantius] did not fly into a temper, he sought no punishment, nor did he humble the city in any way', *Lib. Or.* 19.48f., tr. A.F. Norman (*Libanius: Selected Works* [London and Cambridge MA 1975], ii.299). For an overview of emperors' reactions to jibes, see Gleason (n.41 above), 114f.

55 On Julian's religious and economic policies which led to the hostility between Julian and the *populus* of Antioch, see Downey (n.14 above), 303-15; also G. Downey, 'The Economic Crisis at Antioch under Julian the Apostate', in P.R. Coleman-Norton (ed.), *Studies in Roman Economic and Social History in Honour of AC Johnson* (Freeport NY 1951), 312-21.

56 On the exit of Julian from Antioch, see Libanius, *Or.* 16.35.

57 On the death of Julian, cf. Libanius, *Or.* 18.274; 24.

58 Revenge was one of Julian's motives for the Persian campaign, A.M. 23.5.18. Cf. J. Den Boeft, J. W. Drijvers, D. Den Hengst, H. C. Teitler, *Philological and Historical Commentary on Ammianus Marcellinus XXIV* (Leiden 2002), 197. On the sacrificing of bulls by Julian, see Socrates, *HE*, 3.17: 'They added that the bull which he (Julian) impressed upon his coin was a symbol of his having desolated the world. For the emperor...was continually sacrificing bulls on the altars of his idols and had ordered the impression of a bull and altar to be made upon his coins.' Julian was also nicknamed 'bull-burner', Greg. Naz., *Contra Julianum* 1.77.

59 Cf. D. Conduche, 'Ammien Marcellin et la mort de Julien', *Latomus* 24 (1965), 359-80, at 370. Also, J. H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, 'Ammianus, Julian, and Divination', in M. Wisseman (ed.), *Roma Renascens: Beiträge zur Spätantike und Rezeptionsgeschichte* (Frankfurt 1988), 198-213.

might occur for him would have begun to play on his mind (cf. A.M. 25.2.4.). In his language, Ammianus (22.5.2, 22.12.6) does not show support for Julian's behaviour, partly because, being a 'more conservative pagan', he was censorious of the emperor's exorbitant sacrifices.⁶⁰ One may point out though that Marcus Aurelius, whom Julian sought to emulate, also made excessive sacrifices, which were also criticised by the *populus* (A.M. 25.4.17).

As we have seen then, anger was very much apparent in Julian as a result of the behaviour of the citizens of the city of Antioch, who had verbally attacked and insulted him for a variety of reasons, not least his physical appearance and his reinstatement of overly indulgent pagan rituals.⁶¹ If Ammianus had sought to write a panegyric on Julian, who combined the elements of *miles* and *graecus* to construct his own selfhood, much as Ammianus did through his closing statement,⁶² then surely it ended here. For in Antioch all of the emperor's great ideas, such as his desire to restore pagan institutions, to decide in legal matters and to make reforms in the Senate, were mocked and chastised by the very people whom he believed would actively support him. The city of Antioch was, for Julian, a place in which he was confident that his perception of fourth century Hellenism would be readily accepted.⁶³ For this cosmopolitan city epitomised for him a centre of culture and learning on the scale of Alexandria. Julian's restoration of all things Greek, including culture, worship of the old gods and identification with the city of Antioch, all support this.⁶⁴ In reality, Antioch did still retain many of its pagan shrines, and was home to the rhetorician Libanius, whose lectures on the old traditions had certainly made an impact on the young Julian at Nicomedia.⁶⁵

Unfortunately, Antioch also became the city where, as Ammianus shows us, the emperor who had so far held himself together remarkably well against all the odds, suddenly came undone under pressure from the Senate and populace. For Julian was aggrieved when the citizens as well as the Senate did not accept his reforms wholeheartedly (cf. *Lib. Or.* 15.55; 16.13-14),⁶⁶ and even mocked him at the New Year celebrations, something that his ego could not tolerate. As a consequence of this treatment by the Antiochenes, at the outset of his Persian expedition,⁶⁷ the young

60 Gleason (n.41 above), 114.

61 For Julian's paganism, see the works of Julian himself. Julian turned from the Christian way (οΙδov~) to paganism ten years before he gave up the appearance of a publicly practising Christian, *Ep.* 3.434d.

62 Cf. J. Stoian, 'A propos de la conception historique d'Ammien', *Latomus* 26 (1967), 73-81, at 79: 'La carrière de Julien montre qu'une formation, qu'un mode de vie "à la grecque" pouvaient s'allier à une brillante carrière d'officier. Ammien, grec lui-même, avait abordé le métier de soldat avec la même sorte de préparation que Julien. Lui aussi avait du s'entendre appeler graeculus...par ceux qui pensaient qu'un intellectuel grec n'avait pas à se mêler du viril métier des armes.'

63 For Julian as 'the restorer of Hellenism' or 'the champion of Hellenism', see J. Bouffartigue, 'Julien ou l'hellénisme décomposé', in S. Said (ed.), *Hellenismos: Quelques jalons pour une histoire de l'identité grecque: Actes du Colloque de Strasbourg, 25-27 octobre 1987* (Leiden 1991), 251-66.

64 Cf. Stoian (n. 62), 79: 'C'est ce que démontre, entre autres, surtout l'oeuvre de Julien l'Apostat, chez qui l'opposition hellène-hellénisme et chrétien-christianisme, remplaçant, de toute évidence, l'opposition hellène-barbare, se rencontre souvent avec une intention élogieuse pour l'hellénisme et péjorative pour le christianisme.'

65 Downey (n.14 above), 306.

66 E.g. when Julian restored altars in Antioch, the Christian *populus* frequently destroyed them, Julian, *Mis.* 361b; cf. *Lib. Or.* 17.7 for the destruction of altars after Julian's death.

67 On Ammianus' narrative of Julian's Persian expedition, see R. Smith, 'Telling Tales: Ammianus' Narrative of the Persian Expedition of Julian', in J.W. Drijvers & D. Hunt (eds), *The Late Roman World and its Historian: Interpreting Ammianus Marcellinus* (London 1999), 89-104.

emperor left Antioch in a fury. According to Ammianus, the people of Antioch responded by begging for his glorious return and praying that his anger would by then be abated. Instead, Julian manifested his anger through a verbal outburst, claiming that he had no intention of visiting the Antiochenes again (23.2.4). The consequence for the people of Antioch was that Julian replaced himself with a cruel governor, one Alexander of Heliopolis, who, he allegedly believed, would keep the greedy and rebellious people of the city in check.⁶⁸ As stated above, his words upon his departure seemed eerily to seal his own fate, and Julian died on his Persian expedition before he had a chance to renounce them.

Julian's Persian Expedition

Julian's Persian expedition was a point of departure from the ongoing support he received in the accounts of Ammianus during his appointment in Gaul, to the historian's far more neutral and at times condescending approach to his Eastern campaigns. Anger for Julian became a far more predominant force in Persia, and several occasions occurred in which he lost his temper towards his own men, which sometimes led to extreme punishments. There was of course a need for generals to deal severely with their troops in order to restore discipline, and discipline was certainly becoming an issue on this campaign. Whilst in the East, Julian was aware of the importance of presenting himself as a strong and effective leader. That the emperor's punishments were severe is certain, but it does appear that he was able to implement his authority in a way that would quell any mutinous activities.

In 363, at 24.3.2, Julian was angry (*ira*) when he learnt that the Persians had attacked three squadrons of the Roman cavalry, and that the standards were not adequately protected. As a consequence he had the two surviving tribunes cashiered and the ten soldiers who had fled from the field put to death.⁶⁹ This then is the first record of Julian's loss of composure on his Persian expedition, which increased during this campaign.⁷⁰ Shortly afterwards (24.3.3), he promised his soldiers 100 denarii each as a reward for their services, but when they protested at the small sum he was roused to deep indignation (*indignationem*), and his response was to reproach them in a carefully worded address, which averted a potential mutiny. Thus, although the army of Julian had just witnessed the consequences of Julian's anger at 24.3.2, collectively their anger was felt as a consequence of perceived injustices and perhaps unsatisfactory conditions, and this emotion overcame their fear of violent reprisals. Their united anger was a powerful threat to any leader, and Julian was fortunate in his ability to quell it with a speech.

The next two instances we have of Julian exhibiting anger towards his own troops are in response to their seeming cowardice. At 24.5.10, Ammianus writes that Julian was roused to bitter anger by the apparent fearfulness of his men when the Persians attacked the Roman cohort: *im-*

68 Libanius (*Ep.* 811) was at first critical of the harsh measures of Alexander, but later sang his praises. Cf. *Or.* 15.74. Pack (n.40 above), 82, makes the suggestion that Ammianus' negative phrasing here may reflect the attempt by Alexander to enrol the historian in curial service.

69 Cf. Williams (n.22 above), 68. This punishment seems like decimation, as it involved ten men out of almost one hundred, cf. Browning (n.44 above), 201.

70 Den Boeft et al. (n.58 above), 72.

perator ira graui permotus. The consequence for the Roman soldiers was that the angry emperor subjected the surviving members of the group, who were said not to have shown any spirit in resisting the marauders' attack, with loss of rank. The next and final episode occurs at 25.1.8, when Ammianus describes the anger of Julian towards the cavalry troop of the Tertiaci, which had given way during a battle with the Persians and thus dampened the ardour of the army: 'Julian, in a fit of righteous indignation, deprived them of their standards, broke their spears, and condemned all who were charged with flight to march among the baggage train with the prisoners.' These two instances illustrate the difficulties of persuading Gallic troops to fight against a hostile eastern enemy, when clearly emotions were running high and disorder was becoming more and more noticeable. Ammianus does not make a judgement here, but his neutral language removes him from directly supporting Julian in an increasingly adverse environment.

Further into the Persian campaign, we again get the sense that Ammianus withholds his approval of the anger of Julian. For, in general, Ammianus is supportive of *ira militum*,⁷¹ but when it comes to leaders exhibiting anger there is often a negative connotation involved. Therefore, when Julian exhibits anger towards the Persians at 24.5.6, and recklessly endangers his life, this is met with language that holds no supportive elements from the historian. Moreover, we then have Ammianus' portrait of Julian, who is the only emperor described by the historian to express his anger through the grinding of his teeth (*unde profectus imperator iratus et frendens*), as if reduced to the figure of a common soldier or a barbarian.⁷² Further on at 24.5.7 Ammianus goes on to describe how Julian was fearfully enraged (*concitus ira immani*) when missiles rained down on him from a Persian fortress. Thus reflective experience had been cognitively assessed by the emperor and beliefs about the enemy led to Julian openly expressing his hostility towards a perceived injustice.⁷³ Julian was overly enthusiastic in his approach to the fortress, which he attended with only a small retinue. He was saved from great danger (*euitato magno discrimine*) only through the reactions of his highly trained escort. As a result, Julian resolved to besiege the fortress, possibly on May 21.⁷⁴ This particular incident certainly shows that Julian was behaving more and more out of character and assessing situations badly.⁷⁵ From Ammianus' perspective, this is behaviour not normally associated with the conscientious and right-minded emperor, and the expressing of his anger in such a physical way (i.e. the grinding of his teeth) was certainly well beneath his station. Also, the mere fact that Ammianus mentions it suggests that he certainly held it as remarkable. However, there is no evident disapproval in Ammianus' account, though clearly it deserves some.⁷⁶ On the other hand, there is no approval either, which we do find in his accounts of Julian in Gaul.⁷⁷

71 For *ira militum* and the like, cf. A.M. 15.12.2, 16.12.52, 17.10.6, 13.9, 15, 19.5.8, 11.14, 20.4.16, 7.15, 21.13.16, 24.2.5, 4.1, 25, 25.3.6, 7.4, 26.9.3, 28.6.23.

72 Barbarians grinding their teeth in rage: A.M. 15.4.9, 16.12.36, 29.6.12; Persian soldiers: 19.6.8; Roman soldiers: 19.5.3.

73 However, it has been said that this event was inspired purely by an irrational calculation, caused through his emotional reaction, Den Boeft et al. (n.58 above), 161.

74 Den Boeft et al. (n.58 above), 161.

75 Cf. Den Boeft et al. (n.58 above), 159.

76 Cf. Den Boeft et al. (n.58 above), 159. However, Seager (n.12 above), 35 does see that the historian's disapproval here is beyond doubt.

77 Indeed, in his entire *Res Gestae*, Ammianus uses the term *frendere* seven times; four of these are to describe barbarians; Den Boeft et al. (n.58 above), 159. Thus the application of *frendere* to Julian sug-

Julian's rashness contributed to his death on 26 June 363, whilst on the Persian campaign. Although no anger word is used by Ammianus in this episode to describe Julian's impulsiveness (which is unusual), this episode serves to highlight the danger that giving in to emotion rather than reason can (sometimes) have for an individual. Ammianus is aware of the anger, as well as the reckless and risky behaviour of Julian, and begins at 25.3.2 by saying that the emperor was personally going forward to reconnoitre, unarmed. His men then recalled him, by informing him that the Persians had suddenly attacked the rear guard from behind. Caught up in the excitement of this, Julian hastened to aid the rear, but forgot his coat of mail.⁷⁸ Libanius (*Or.* 18.269) concurs with Ammianus, stating that Julian was not wearing armour and was only attended by one body-guard. Woods however suggests that Julian was actually so well surrounded by officers and the *scholae palatinae* that he did not feel it necessary to don his armour.⁷⁹ According to our historian, the emperor, unprotected, rushed about in the battle, careless of his own safety (*cauendi immemor*), where he attempted to rouse his men to angry pursuits (*irasque sequentium*), even though the Persians were already considering a hasty retreat.⁸⁰ Whatever the situation, as Ammianus reports it, as the emperor rushed boldly into fight, a cavalryman's spear wounded him fatally (25.3.6). After a few hours the emperor died, leading his men in their anger and grief to attack the Persians more vehemently.

The death of Julian led his soldiers to mourn and lament their beloved leader, but surprisingly Ammianus does not share in the grief and his language conveys nothing to suggest his emotional attachment that had once been so strong. The best explanation for this, I suggest, is that Ammianus had relied on Julian to provide a strong contrast between moderation and excess, especially in regards to the Emperor Constantius, whose emotional behaviour the historian simply could not identify with (e.g. at 21.16.9; see Appendix). When this concept fell through, then Ammianus no longer felt able to present Julian in the best regard, and this is certainly apparent towards the end of the emperor's career. However, in saying this, we must remember that Ammianus was in general supportive of Julian throughout his reign, and thus there are many *exempla*, as pointed out by Blockley, which positively reflect his actions and choices whilst campaigning in Persia.⁸¹ It is rather that Julian's emotional turn of mind negatively impacted on the historian's portrayal of him and this brought a cloud over much of his presentation of Julian in the east.

Ammianus' Perception and Portrayal of Julian

Detailed examination of Ammianus' text raises a number of issues, chiefly concerning his own identification with the emperor, and the way this impacted on his portrayal. His main priority was

gests that the emperor was certainly lacking in the composure that ought to have been exhibited by a man of his station.

78 On the puzzling indication by Ammianus on the absence of the *scutarii* at Julian's death, see Woods (n. 25 above), 279.

79 Woods (n.25 above), 279f.

80 Cf. Bowersock (n.22 above), 116.

81 Blockley (n.4 above), 56.

to present Julian in the best possible light, for he possessed many admirable traits that one assumes the historian himself sought to emulate as far as was practical. But why suddenly cease only portraying the positive, when Ammianus was not averse to including exaggerations and distortions of the truth in other parts of his work?⁸² True, there is still the odd word of praise in the latter days of Julian's reign, and of course the emperor still retained many of his praiseworthy attributes, such as courage and virtue.⁸³ Nevertheless, the historian does seriously begin to question the judgement of the emperor, something that in his Gallic accounts he had never directly done. Similarly, though Ammianus was a pagan, he was a conservative one at best, and thus the religious choices of the emperor no longer seem to hold the same appeal that they had once done.⁸⁴ This occurred notably when Julian's sacrifices became grossly exaggerated, and his wrath suddenly turned upon the god who should have aided in his expedition, Mars Ultor (24.6.17). Ammianus (22.12.6-7) complains in unconcealed terms that, '...the victims with whose blood he drenched the altars of the gods were all too numerous.... Ceremonial rites too were performed with increased and excessive frequency, at a heavy cost hitherto quite unheard of.' Indeed, Libanius (*Or.* 12.80) also criticised the numbers of Julian's blood sacrifices. It was a sign of impiety to become angry towards the gods, and when Julian *exclamavit indignatus* and swore to reject Mars, this was an element of hubris that no conscientious pagan could morally support. Accordingly, Julian died from a spear thrown during a battle with the Persians. Surely rejecting the very god who should have protected him was the ultimate twist of fate for an emperor who sought to bring back the traditional religions in this period of burgeoning Christianity. Therefore, wrath against a god would have elicited an uncomfortable response in Ammianus; however, his criticism does also seem to include the extent of Julian's extravagant expenditure on these religious practices.⁸⁵ After Julian's death, his pagan reforms failed.⁸⁶

Ammianus was drawn to those individuals whom he perceived to share similar cultural values to himself, and whose moral ideals closely reflected his own.⁸⁷ Julian's quest was to re-establish an empire-wide pagan form of religion; consequently, he restored temples and statues and reinstated to non-Christians much of what Christians claimed as their own. Julian had studied in the great National School of Athens and had also been admitted into the Eleusinian Mysteries. His education in philosophy as well as his cultural background engendered in him a keen desire to

82 E.g. exaggerations occur at 28.3.7 (perhaps) (cf. R.C. Blockley, 'The Date of the "Barbarian Conspiracy"', *Britannia* 11 [1980], 223-25, at 225); also 16.2.2 (cf. P.A. Barceló, *Roms auswärtige Beziehungen unter der Constanischen Dynastie (306-363)* [Regensburg 1981], 34); 25.4.25 (cf. Seager [n.13 above], 593).

83 See the obituary of Julian, A.M. 25.4.

84 On Ammianus' religious background, along with the supporting evidence, see Barnes (n.26 above), ch. 8.

85 Cf. Barnes (n.22 above), 161.

86 Julian (*Ep.* 3.434d) turned from the Christian way (οJdov~) to paganism ten years before he gave up the appearance of a publicly practising Christian. When Julian restored altars in Antioch, the Christian *populus* frequently destroyed them (Julian, *Mis.* 361b; cf. *Lib. Or.* 17.7 for the destruction of altars after Julian's death). See Bradbury (n.14 above), 331-56. For Julian's paganism see the works of Julian himself.

87 For Ammianus as a moral historian, see Brandt (n.3 above).

improve legislation, administration and finances.⁸⁸ All these things held a powerful appeal for our historian. However, Ammianus' stout conservatism was reflected in his support of the curial class,⁸⁹ and when political decisions affected either the economic power or the privileges of this class, such as at 24.4.21, when foreigners or those exempt by birth or privilege were conscripted into curial service,⁹⁰ the historian either reacted with hostility, or simply withdrew from making favourable comments—which is indeed how he reacted to Julian's decisions in Antioch. One could ask whether Ammianus was simply using Julian as a means to make a point, and when his behaviour was no longer appropriate for the historian's needs in educating his public on the correct mode of behaviour, then his portraiture became rather indifferent. If this is so, then it strongly suggests that Ammianus is incorporating his educational background in rhetoric to its full effect, to demonstrate how choices can be seriously affected when one gives in to emotion, rather than reason.⁹¹

Certainly, the fact that Ammianus so noticeably changes his presentation of the emperor Julian during the Persian expedition, a military operation in which Ammianus was himself a participant,⁹² suffices to prove that it produced such a significant strain on the psyche of the Augustus, that Ammianus could no longer consciously support his decisions. In fact, it must be recalled that Julian's reign was extremely brief, less than two years (sole Augustus, 3 November 361–26 June 363), and one may suppose that if he had remained in the capital of the eastern empire and not travelled to Antioch or further into Persia, then his reforms may have been better supported and longer lasting, and Ammianus would not have had such cause for blame. Unfortunately, we cannot know the true mind of the historian, or the extent to which his disenchantment with the emperor stretched, but what we do know is that Ammianus was particularly opposed to emotional excess, irrationality and carelessness, all traits that the young emperor came to exhibit. Indeed, this only brings us back to the previous difficulty once more, for how could such a cultured and sophisticated Augustus, who had had such encouraging victories in Gaul, suddenly let spontaneity and emotion dictate his choices? How, and why, did Julian come to change his outlook on life, and consequently lose much of the admiration Ammianus once almost unquestioningly held for him? Perhaps it was simply that power, even when held for only a brief period, changes people.

88 For Julian's education as a student in Athens, see the (unsympathetic) eyewitness account of Gregory of Nazianzus, *Orat.* 5.23. Cf. for Julian's education, R. Smith, *Julian's Gods: Religion and Philosophy in the Thought and Action of Julian the Apostate* (London 1995), ch. 2.

89 The curial class, or municipal senators, was a hereditary order, and Ammianus' sympathy towards this group (25.9.3; 27.7.6; 28.6.4, 10, 18; 29.2.27) has aroused general agreement in scholars that the historian was a part of this order; cf. Thompson (n.40 above), 2, 81.

90 Cf. Pack (n.40 above), 80. For Julian's animosity with the curia of Antioch, see A.M. 22.14.1–2.

91 Cf. for Ammianus' educational background, P. Alvarez, *The Impact of Rhetoric and Education on the "Res Gestae" of Ammianus Marcellinus* (Diss. Alberta 2006). For Ammianus' needs in educating his public, see K. Rosen, *Studien zur Darstellungskunst und Glaubwürdigkeit des Ammianus Marcellinus* (Darmstadt 1970). In order to construe emotional characterisations, the historian had to create some type of impact on his rhetoric-influenced elite listeners and readers whom he sought to educate about foreign lands and customs, and Rosen provides an understanding of Ammianus' ability to achieve this. Ammianus also teaches right behaviour through many *exempla*, condemning those who fall short.

92 For Ammianus as an eyewitness, see R.C. Blockley, 'Ammianus Marcellinus on the Persian Invasion of A.D. 359', *Phoenix* 42 (1988), 244–60; J.W. Drijvers, 'Ammianus Marcellinus on the Geography of the Pontus Euxinus', *Histos* 2 (1998), <http://www.dur.ac.uk/Classics/histos/>.

Even this brief review of the emotional changes in Julian quickly reveals much about the historian's purpose in his portrayals. For example, whilst Julian was serving as Caesar and then as Augustus in Gaul, Ammianus describes his anger as always accompanied with just cause, and never coupled with cruelty or excess, such as he describes the anger of the emperors Constantius II and Valentinian I. For example, in Constantius' obituary (21.16.8-9) Ammianus writes of the emperor's rage and his manifest cruelty, which, he states, 'easily surpassed that of Caligula and Domitian and Commodus'. At 14.5.5 Ammianus writes of Constantius, 'this fatal fault of cruelty, which in others sometimes grew less with advancing age, in his case became more violent, since a group of flatterers intensified his stubborn resolution' (cf. 19.12.9). Of Valentinian, Ammianus (29.3.9) increases his audience's perceptions of the villainous character of the emperor simply by stating that his mind recoils from recording all examples of Valentinian's cruelty, the suggestion thus being that there were far more instances than he would ever have a chance to reveal.⁹³

By far the most instances of anger accorded to an individual are given to Julian, with seventeen episodes.⁹⁴ This reflects the degree of importance Ammianus gives to his favourite emperor, rather than necessarily being an accurate representation of his qualities as Augustus, the length of his reign or even his temperament. Julian reigned from 360-363 (as usurper and then as sole Augustus, as Caesar 355-360), whereas Valentinian I, who is specifically recorded as getting angry only eleven times, reigned far longer, from 364-375; i.e. eleven years as opposed to eight. Valentinian was generalised as being an irascible emperor, but Ammianus was more concerned with presenting him as a stereotypical, anger-prone figure and thus his anger episodes are frequently alluded to rather than being realised manifestly. To summarise the data presented in the Appendix: out of the forty-nine recorded instances of anger for emperors and Caesars, Julian's anger makes up 34.69% of the anger instances, whereas Valentinian's anger makes up 18.36%, which, incidentally, is exactly the same percentage as for Constantius (who reigned for twenty-four years). Through developing characters along these lines, Ammianus subjects himself to literary tradition, with the good emperors balanced out by the bad; although there are in fact grey areas.

Furthermore, Ammianus reveals that following his departure from Antioch, Julian's anger became less than justified, and primary manifestations became far more prominent,⁹⁵ suggesting he was degenerating into something less than the cultured sophisticate he once had so strongly been, and more like the unfathomable emperors who were ready to vent their anger at every conceivable opportunity. Finally, he would lack all self-control and cool-headedness when faced with Persian forces on June 26 363 at Maranga in Mesopotamia.

93 E.A. Thompson, *The Historical Work of Ammianus Marcellinus* (Groningen 1969), 87: 'Over 75 lines (Clark) are devoted to vices compared with under 30 for virtues; and about 22 lines of the section on vices are concerned with his anger and cruelty against a mere 6 lines for the first three vices mentioned, important public ones. The narrative reflects the imbalance. There little is heard of the Emperor's cowardice or envy, whereas cruelty and injustice, which are stressed in the elogium, predominate.'

94 These statistics are based on specific anger words, such as *ira* and *indignatio*, and include only specific instances, not those that are simply surmised by Ammianus. See Appendix 1.

95 E.g. at A.M. 23.2.4 (verbal rebuff) and 24.5.6 (gnashing and grinding of the teeth).

Conclusion

For much of his narrative on the emperor, the anger of Julian is a significant way in which Ammianus registers his disappointment with his hero, even if it is not the most important aspect of his critique of Julian. What comes up a number of times in the *Res Gestae* is Julian's love of popularity, which leads him to do things which he should not. It could very well be that his attempt to conquer Persia fed into his need for public approval, and that his anger was a result of the terrifyingly frustrating situation in which he found himself. Furthermore, Julian's anger is not what distinguishes him. It comes out certainly, but it does not define him in the way it defines the other *Augusti* in Ammianus' history.

According to Ammianus, Julian became disillusioned when his reintroduction of pagan practices, as well as his judicial and legislative reforms, was not met with the universal approval he had expected. Julian apparently took matters to heart when, in Antioch, the population ridiculed him, and so when preparations were finally set for the Persian expedition, he stormed out of the city, vowing to never return. For Ammianus, this signalled the end of the flattering treatment he had so far given the emperor, for as Julian marched through Persia, his decisions became more and more erratic, and his emotional state worsened. Hence when Julian was struck by a fateful spear, we get a neutral tone in the language of the historian, and it is only when he begins his obituary that the praise once again renews. Ammianus states precisely the events and emotional state that lead up to the demise of Julian, and from the use of the first person we are assured that Ammianus was personally involved in this mission. Finally, it is with a sense of relief that with the death of Julian, Ammianus, along with the newly acclaimed emperor Jovian, and accompanied by Julian's forces, were able to begin the journey back into Roman territory. It has been said of this episode that 'Ammianus' account of the Persian invasion of 359 is a very self-consciously literary and literate piece of writing, whose debts to the classical models have been thoroughly illustrated'.⁹⁶ After all, war was Julian's ultimate purpose and he sought to bring glory to Rome as Alexander had done for the Macedonians, but his successes in the West were not matched by those in the East and his increasing frustration was felt by Ammianus, whose language remains more and more neutral as he tried his best to refrain from judging him. Ammianus was especially opposed to anger when it came to imperial or other high-ranking figures, and clearly on a number of occasions Julian was going far beyond the bounds of control. At 25.2.3-8 Ammianus recorded many portents of Julian's doom prior to his death, including a shooting star that Julian fearfully took to be the god Mars appearing to him. The death of Julian is coupled with the knowledge that the Persians were ultimately successful, and as is often the case, it was the leader who could better control his anger who won the day.

To return to the starting point of the present investigation, Ammianus moves from actively supporting the anger of Julian in his literature, to refraining from commending and even criticising his behaviour in the east. What Ammianus was looking for was a strong military emperor and someone who was the opposite of Constantius, who prided himself on being the model of citizen emperors (15.1.3). Ammianus saw himself as part of the military elite, and this similarity with Julian's status was certainly part of the young leader's appeal to him. Whilst Julian behaved as a

96 Blockley (n.92 above), 247.

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strong military leader, he received praise and support from the historian. However, when Julian's decisions became charged with emotion and his choices seemed reckless and impetuous, Ammianus' attitude to the prince changed dramatically. This was certainly not the historian's primary objective, but something that naturally evolved from the nature of the events leading up to Julian's death. For Ammianus, Julian could be the strong, cultured leader who fulfilled all his hopes and expectations, not just for a revival of the old institutions, but for re-energising the empire and bringing the strength of unity and stability that our historian strongly desired. In other words, Julian increasingly became a disappointment to Ammianus, and started to resemble his cousin Constantius more—although Constantius was certainly less reckless. In fact, Julian's audacity in Gaul became a liability in the East.

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Appendix—The Anger of Emperors and Caesars in the *Res Gestae*

Emperor	Anger Word and Instance	Total	Percentage
Constantius	dolor (14.11.23); exardesco (14.11.13); excandescio (20.9.2); fel (19.12.5); fremo (16.8.7); indignatio (20.9.2); ira (14.11.23); iracundia (14.5.4); irascor (20.2.5)	9	18.36%
Diocletian	irascor (14.11.10)	1	2.04%
Gallus	accendo (14.7.4); commoueo (14.7.12); effero (14.1.10, 14.7.2); rabies (14.1.10); saeuio (14.1.2, 14.7.21)	7	14.28%
Julian	frendo (24.5.6); indignatio (17.10.8, 24.3.3, 25.1.8); indignor (20.4.15, 22.14.3, 24.6.17); ira (16.4.2, 22.13.2, 22.14.2, 23.2.4, 24.3.2, 24.5.7, 24.5.10); irascor (24.5.6); percio (16.11.8); saeuio (22.14.2)	17	34.69%
Valens	effero (29.1.38); indignatio (26.9.10); ira (30.2.7); rabies (29.1.27); saeuio (29.1.27, 31.14.5)	6	12.24%
Valentinian	effero (28.1.11); excandescio (30.5.10); ira (27.7.7, 30.5.10, 30.6.3); iracundia (28.1.23); irascor (28.2.9); percio (27.7.7, 28.1.23)	9	18.36%
Total 49			