



**MACQUARIE**  
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**Theodosius II and his Image: Three Case Studies in Imperial Presentation, Ceremonial and  
Reception**

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## Abstract

Theodosius II (402-450 AD) was a non-campaigning sedentary emperor who lived and ruled the majority of his life within the city walls of Constantinople. He was orphaned and became sole Emperor at aged seven after the death of his father, Arcadius, in 408 and would continue to reign in the East successfully for a further forty-two years. Despite the limitations and anxieties associated with child-emperor rule, there is no clear evidence to suggest his position was ever contested nor his role as emperor ever questioned. This thesis will analyse three key components of the emperor's reign to consider how the Eastern Theodosian regime first adapted and later developed traditional imperial presentation to better suit their unique situation of an emperor ruling the empire from such a young age without any adult familial support.

The first case study examines the contemporary presentation and long-term reception of the public image of the Eastern branch of the Theodosian family. It will highlight the earliest identifiable establishment of this image in 414, after the proclamation of perpetual virginity by the emperor's sisters and Pulcheria's elevation to Augusta, and assess how it grew and developed alongside the family. The second case study assesses, through five examples, the active role Theodosius II played in the ceremonial life of Constantinople. It will highlight not only how this emperor reinvented traditional elements in imperial performance, but will also show the consistent portrayal of his behaviour in the sources that range from contemporary accounts to the ninth century. Finally, the third case study analyses the portrayal of Theodosius II as the father figure to Western emperor Valentinian III, his young cousin. This case study assesses three key events, the Eastern military expedition to install Valentinian III onto the Western throne between 424 and 425, the marriage of Theodosius II's only surviving child, Licinia Eudoxia to the Western emperor in 437, and the proclamation of the Theodosian Code a year later, to show the ongoing development of this image throughout this period. Through these three case studies, this thesis will argue that Theodosius II was not only an active participant in his long reign, but also successfully established a new form of active leadership – one based primarily within the imperial city and amongst its citizenry.

### Declaration by Author

*This work has not previously been submitted for a degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the thesis itself.*

(Signed) Abejara Paa . Date: 10/02/2019

## Acknowledgements

I would like to take this opportunity to thank a small group of people who have helped me over the past two years.

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Nothing writes a thesis better than the fear of public humiliation.

Wiser words have never been spoken, and the conclusions in Chapter One were reached to avoid this public humiliation.

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## List of Abbreviations

### 1.1 Standard References

<b><i>AE</i></b>	<i>L'Année Épigraphique</i> , Paris, 1888 – present.
<b><i>ACO</i></b>	Schwartz, E. ed. 1959. <i>Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum</i> , Berlin.
<b><i>CLRE</i></b>	Bagnall, R. S., Cameron, A., Schwartz, S. R. and Worp, K. A. 1987. <i>Consuls of the Later Roman Empire</i> , Atlanta: The American Philological Association.
<b><i>CIL</i></b>	Henzen, W., Huelsen, C. and Mommsen, T., et al. 1862-present. <i>Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum</i> , Berlin: George Reimer.
<b><i>IG</i></b>	Kirchner, J. ed. 1940. <i>Inscriptiones Atticae Evclidis Anno Posteriores</i> , Berlin: Walter De Gruyter and Co.
<b><i>ILS</i></b>	Dessau, H. 1892-1916, <i>Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae</i> , 3 vols, Berlin.
<b><i>LSA</i></b>	Ward-Perkins, B. and Smith, R. R. R. eds. 2012. <i>Last Statues of Antiquity Database</i> , <a href="http://laststatues.classics.ox.ac.uk/">http://laststatues.classics.ox.ac.uk/</a>
<b><i>PLRE I</i></b>	Jones, A. H. M., Martindale, J. R. and Morris, J. 1971. <i>The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire, Volume 1 A.D.260-395</i> , Cambridge.
<b><i>PLRE II</i></b>	Martindale, J. R. 1971. <i>The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire, Volume 2 AD 395-527</i> , Cambridge.
<b><i>RIC I<sup>2</sup></i></b>	Sutherland, C. H. V. and Carson, R. A. G. eds. 1984. London. <i>Roman Imperial Coinage, Volume I</i> , London: Spink and Son LTD. Revised Edition.
<b><i>RIC II</i></b>	Mattingly, H. and Sydenham, E. A. eds. 1968. London. <i>Roman Imperial Coinage, Volume II</i> , London: Spink and Son LTD.
<b><i>RIC IV</i></b>	Mattingly, H. and Sydenham, E. A. eds. 1968. London. <i>Roman Imperial Coinage, Volume IV</i> , London: Spink and Son LTD.

<b><i>RIC VII</i></b>	Sutherland, C. H. V. and Carson, R. A. G. eds. 1966. London. <i>Roman Imperial Coinage, Volume VII</i> , London: Spink and Son LTD.
<b><i>RIC IX</i></b>	Mattingly, H., Sutherland, C. H. V. and Sydenham, E. A. eds. 1968. London. <i>Roman Imperial Coinage, Volume IX</i> , London: Spink and Son LTD.
<b><i>RIC X</i></b>	Carson, R. A. G., Kent, J. P. C. and Burnett, A. M. eds. 1994. <i>Roman Imperial Coinage, Volume X</i> , London: Spink and Son LTD.

## 2.1 Ancient Sources

Ancient sources have been abbreviated according to the Oxford Classical Dictionary fourth edition's guide, except for the following:

### **Ambrose of Milan**

Amb. <i>De ob. Theod.</i>	On the Death of Theodosius
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### **Claudian**

Claud. <i>Eutr.</i>	Against Eutropius
Claud. <i>Gild.</i>	The War against Gildo
Claud. <i>Ruf.</i>	Against Rufinus

### **Evagrius**

Evagr.	Ecclesiastical History
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### **Hydatius**

Hydatius	Chronicle
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### **John Malalas**

Joh. Mal.	Chronicle
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### **John of Nikiu**

Joh. Nik.	Chronicle
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### **Marcellinus comes**

Marcel. <i>com.</i>	Chronicle
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**Mark the Deacon**

Mark the Deacon *V. Porph.* Life of Porphyry

**Nestorius**

Nestorius *Bazaar* The Bazaar of Heracleides

***Notitia Urbis Constantinopolitanae***

*Not. Urb. Con.* *Notitia Urbis Constantinopolitanae*

**Olympiodorus**

Olymp. Frag. Fragments in Blockley 1983

**Pacatus**

Pac. *Pan. Theod.* Panegyric to the Emperor Theodosius

**Philostorgius**

Philostor. *HE* Ecclesiastical History

**Priscus**

Prisc. Frag. Fragments in Blockley 1983

**Rufinus**

Ruf. *HE* Ecclesiastical History

**Socrates**

Soc. Ecclesiastical History

**Sozomen**

Soz. Ecclesiastical History

**Theophanes**

Theoph. AM Chronicle

## Introduction

### 1.1 The Question and Approach

Theodosius II (408-450 AD), who lived and ruled the majority of his life in Constantinople, was the longest reigning emperor in Roman history.<sup>1</sup> With a reign spanning almost the entire first half of the fifth century, this forty-two-year period significantly contributed to the ongoing developments of imperial rule, which progressively focused on the newly established Eastern imperial city of Constantinople – effectively transformed into the Eastern capital by the Theodosian House – and its citizenry. These developments, first begun by his grandfather, Theodosius I (379-395) and continued by his father, Arcadius (395-408), allowed a new form of active leadership to emerge in the East – one that shifted away from the battlefield and the army, and moved towards the city and its people.<sup>2</sup> As such, by the time of Theodosius II's sudden death in 450, long-term imperial presence in Constantinople and the support of its citizenry had become important components in the stability and longevity of an emperor's reign.<sup>3</sup> This thesis, therefore, assesses aspects of the public image of Theodosius II's reign to determine its contribution in establishing this redefined active imperial rule within Constantinople.

In 408, after the unexpected death of Arcadius, the seven-year-old Theodosius II made his full accession as emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire.<sup>4</sup> Throughout his forty-two-year reign, the Eastern government remained stable and prosperous, with the emperor never facing any credible usurpation or civil war protesting his position. Although an impressive feat for any emperor, Theodosius II's early and lasting stability is all the more incredible when one considers the ages of the surviving members of the Eastern Theodosian family in 408. Following the death of his wife, Eudoxia, in 404, four children survived Arcadius' own passing: nine-year-old Pulcheria, eight-year-old Arcadia, seven-year-old Theodosius II, and five-year-old Marina.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, upon his full accession, the child Theodosius II was placed in the unprecedented situation of ruling the East without any adult familial support.<sup>6</sup> Though many

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<sup>1</sup> All dates henceforth are AD unless otherwise specified.

<sup>2</sup> See Croke 2010 (Theodosius I) and McEvoy forthcoming 2019a (Arcadius) for their contribution in establishing imperial presence in Constantinople and connecting with the citizenry.

<sup>3</sup> This is in stark contrast to the emperors of the preceding century who, with the exception of the child-emperors Gratian, Valentinian II, Arcadius and Honorius, travelled the Empire campaigning with their armies.

<sup>4</sup> He was elevated to co-emperor in the East in 402 when he was nine months old.

<sup>5</sup> Eudoxia died during childbirth. All other adult members of the Theodosian House lived in the West.

<sup>6</sup> The majority of youthful emperors who ruled prior to Theodosius II had adult familial support. For example, Agrippina the Younger and her son Nero, Julia Soaemias and her son Elagabalus, Julia Mamaea and her son

factors contributed to the early success of his reign, namely the continued stability of the government left by Arcadius, often overlooked is the public image of Theodosius II and his sisters. Therefore, this thesis will analyse the early adaptation of the Eastern imperial image to show how the Theodosian regime publicly dealt with the anxieties associated with child-emperor rule. It will demonstrate how the modification of traditional components in imperial presentation aided in the early portrayal of a strong and stable government and empire. Finally, it will highlight how this image, so successful in promoting the initial stability of Theodosius II's reign, was not static, but adjusted to coincide with the emperor's growth into adulthood and the expansion of his family.

Described in much of the modern literature as an inept and weak emperor, Theodosius II is traditionally remembered as a ruler who gained his position through dynastic succession and contributed nothing substantial to imperial rule.<sup>7</sup> However, this interpretation of the longest reigning Roman emperor is distinctly out-dated and does not correspond to his prosperous forty-two-year uncontested rule. In recent years, scholarly opinion on Theodosius II and his reign has begun to change with reassessments of his position within the government, the role of his family and the importance of imperial ceremonial in Constantinople.<sup>8</sup> This thesis builds on these re-assessments to explore how the public image of the Eastern branch of Theodosian family contributed to the stability and longevity of Theodosius II's reign. It does not seek to re-examine the entirety of the emperor's rule but will focus primarily on three key components: imperial presentation, ceremonial and ancient literary reception. This will be analysed in three case studies: (i) the emperor and the Theodosian women; (ii) imperial ceremonial and the city of Constantinople; and (iii) the portrayal of Theodosius II's intervention in the West in the Eastern sources. This thesis will explore significant themes in the presentation of the imperial family from 408 onwards that suggests a clear and methodical approach to this emperor's reign. Moreover, through the examination of instances describing Theodosius II's personal involvement in ceremonies in Constantinople, this thesis will argue that the emperor was an active participant in the promulgation of his image throughout his long reign. Finally, it will analyse the interventions of the Eastern imperial court in the West during the 420s and 430s to highlight the difference in policy from the joint-reign of his predecessors. Overall, through

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Alexander Severus, and Justina and her son Valentinian II. Honorius was supported by his powerful general, Stilicho, who was a relation through marriage. See McEvoy 2019: 118.

<sup>7</sup> For example, Bury 1889: 1.125, 1923: 1.215; Gibbon 1781: 3.265; Jones 1964: 1.1763.

<sup>8</sup> Examples of these reassessments are Elton 2009; Harries 2013; Kelly 2013b; Millar 2006; Van Nuffelen 2012.

progressive developments in imperial presentation, this thesis will show how the image of the Eastern Theodosian family contributed to the stability and longevity of Theodosius II's reign.

All three case studies selected for this examination highlight the public nature of Theodosius II's reign. This thesis aims to show the consistent nature of the emperor's behaviour within the newly established Eastern imperial capital, Constantinople. Recurring themes will emerge throughout the analysis of these three case studies, such as ostentatious imperial piety, the portrayal of unity among the members of the imperial house, and the public presence of the emperor within Constantinople. It does not seek to contribute to the already abundant scholarship pertaining to the theological and church controversies and debates that occurred throughout Theodosius II's reign.<sup>9</sup> However, as piety and the distinctly Christian virtue of humility were important facets of Theodosius II's image, they will be examined with respect to how they were presented and interpreted through the sources in relation to the emperor's public behaviour and presentation. As such, this thesis examines actions and events directly related to the emperor and his family, both at home and abroad, throughout the entirety of his reign, rather than events surrounding them.

## 2.1 Theodosian Dynasty – Theodosius I and his 'Inadequate Heirs'<sup>10</sup>

Theodosius II was the fourth ruling member of the Theodosian Dynasty, which was established by his martial grandfather, Theodosius I in 379. After his death in 395, a new style of imperial rulership was implemented gradually due to the long and successful reigns of his sons, Arcadius and Honorius (395-423), and grandsons, Theodosius II and Valentinian III (425-455). An important contributing factor to this new form of rulership was the youth of all four dynastic heirs of Theodosius I.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, rather than campaigning with their armies, these emperors adopted a more sedentary style rule and lived for prolonged periods in their respective capitals – Ravenna and Rome in the West, and Constantinople in the East.<sup>12</sup> Although this sixty-year period deviated from the campaigning emperors of the fourth century, the successive elevation of young emperors, the longevity of their reigns and their natural deaths, except Valentinian

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<sup>9</sup> See especially Cooper 2004; Graumann 2013; Wessel 2001.

<sup>10</sup> 'Inadequate Heirs' is derived from Icks 2014 in his description of Theodosius I's descendants.

<sup>11</sup> In 395 Arcadius was eighteen and Honorius was eleven. Theodosius II, as already stated, was seven in 408, and Valentinian III was six in 425.

<sup>12</sup> Croke 2010 (East); Gillett 2001 (West).

III, suggests that their new form of leadership was quite successful.<sup>13</sup> Despite this, however, early modern assessment of this long period has not been favourable.

Edward Gibbon first lamented that the ‘genius of Rome expired’ after the death of Theodosius I, for after his reign very few Roman emperors campaigned with their armies.<sup>14</sup> As such, from the beginning of modern inquiry on the Theodosian Dynasty, its members were continually and unfavourably compared to the militaristic *exemplum*, Theodosius I. J. B. Bury and A. H. M. Jones continued Gibbon’s earlier conclusions, focusing their analyses on dominant court members. Although the study of influential figures such as Eutropius, Stilicho, Chrysaphius and Aetius is important for understanding court dynamics in the late fourth and fifth centuries, their assessments were undertaken with almost complete neglect of each respective emperor.<sup>15</sup> As such, serious explorations of the reigns of these emperors has been overlooked in much of the modern scholarship, with more recent scholars often reinforcing the conclusions of their predecessors.<sup>16</sup>

Due to this more negative interpretation of the descendants of Theodosius I, until quite recently none have been seriously considered in relation to their reign nor the changed relationship with their government. Meaghan McEvoy’s 2013 book, *Child Emperor Rule in the Late Roman West, AD 367-455*, was the first major work that examined the regimes of the Western Theodosian emperors Honorius and Valentinian III. Through the analysis of the earlier child-emperors, Gratian (367-383) and Valentinian II (375-392), McEvoy traced the gradual developments in the workings of the imperial court, which were designed to compensate for the shortcomings involved in minority rule. She concluded that Honorius’ twenty-eight year reign was vital for the successful establishment of a ‘partnership’ rule between the emperor and his leading military general.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, she concluded that despite the instability of this period – which saw the rise and fall of powerful generals, usurpers and numerous ‘barbarian’

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<sup>13</sup> Other than Arcadius and Honorius, two other non-campaigning and child-emperors ruled during the fourth century, Gratian (367-383) and Valentinian II (375-392) (McEvoy 2013).

<sup>14</sup> Gibbon 1791: 2.98.

<sup>15</sup> Bury 1889: 2.61-78, 107-122; Bury 1923: 1.106-173, 185-211; Jones 1964: 173-182.

<sup>16</sup> For examples of offhand negative assessments of these emperors and a focus on dominant court members see: Barnes 1975: 157 (Honorius, Arcadius and Valentinian III); Blockley 1982: 113 (Honorius and Arcadius), 133-134 (Theodosius II); Chew 2006: 207-208, 221-223 (Theodosius II), 210 (Valentinian III); Harries 1992: 35 (Theodosius II); Honoré 1998: 77-78 (Arcadius), 97 (Theodosius II), 251 (Valentinian III).

<sup>17</sup> McEvoy 2013: 162-171.

invasions – Honorius continued to represent the image of continuity and stability.<sup>18</sup> For Valentinian III, McEvoy showed how this ‘partnership’ model was adapted to suit his situation between 425 and 455. Although the early years of his reign were quite different to Honorius, namely due to a strong Eastern presence, by the 430s the general, Aetius, had secured his role as Valentinian III’s military partner-figure.<sup>19</sup> That this new form of rule was considered successful is evident through the long reigns and the nature of the eventual deaths of these four Western child-emperors. As McEvoy rightly highlighted, Honorius, who was the only emperor who did not appear to attempt to assert his military function, died from natural causes.<sup>20</sup>

In addition to analysing the role of Theodosius I’s Western descendants, in a forthcoming essay McEvoy has assessed the role of Arcadius in the East. Titled “An Imperial Jellyfish? The Emperor Arcadius and Imperial Leadership in the Late Fourth Century AD,” McEvoy investigated Arcadius’ contribution to the transformation of the Eastern imperial image from a campaigning emperor to a sedentary one focused on the city of Constantinople.<sup>21</sup> Though this transformation began with Theodosius I, McEvoy emphasised how Arcadius’ public presence in the city contributed to the growth of civic loyalty to the ruling dynasty.<sup>22</sup> Importantly, McEvoy highlighted a fact constantly overlooked in modern scholarship – Arcadius successfully handed-over a stable government to his young son, which contributed in innumerable ways to his unchallenged full accession in 408.<sup>23</sup> Finally, she concluded that as Theodosius I was still essentially a campaigning emperor, Arcadius’ reign was the first successful implementation of this new form of rulership in Constantinople, and in many ways laid the foundational framework for Theodosius II.

## 2.2 Theodosius II

The earliest assessments of Theodosius II’s reign from Gibbon, Bury and Jones have resulted in conclusions similar to those regarding Arcadius, Honorius and Valentinian III. Gibbon claimed that the second Theodosius never lived up to the glory of his illustrious name, stating that he degenerated ‘below the weakness of his father and his uncle.’<sup>24</sup> Bury claimed that the

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<sup>18</sup> McEvoy 2013: 218.

<sup>19</sup> McEvoy 2013: 253-254.

<sup>20</sup> Gratian and Valentinian III were assassinated; Valentinian II committed suicide (McEvoy 2013: 218).

<sup>21</sup> McEvoy forthcoming 2019a.

<sup>22</sup> For Theodosius I’s role in this transformation, see Croke 2010.

<sup>23</sup> McEvoy forthcoming 2019a.

<sup>24</sup> Gibbon 1781: 3.265.



emperor was weak, just like his father, and possessed ‘none of the qualities of a capable ruler either in peace or war.’<sup>25</sup> Finally, Jones stated that Theodosius II, like his dynastic predecessors, reigned rather than ruled for forty-two years.<sup>26</sup> Until recently, this uninspiring view of the longest reigning Roman emperor was the dominant perception of Theodosius II in modern scholarship.<sup>27</sup> However, these observations do not correlate with the reality of his reign, which witnessed long periods of stability, prosperity, and security. His reign also saw many achievements: the codification of Roman law, the establishment of the school in Constantinople and the construction of land and sea walls surrounding the city, making it impenetrable for seven hundred years.<sup>28</sup> Recently, a number of important reassessments of Theodosius II’s reign have taken place, beginning primarily with his role in imperial administration.

#### *Key Works on Theodosius II’s Re-assessment*

Fergus Millar’s 2006 book, *A Greek Roman Empire: Power and Belief under Theodosius II (408-450)*, is an important work that questioned the long-held view that Theodosius II was an ineffective ruler. Theodosius II’s sole reign was selected for his study due to the unprecedented amount of surviving source material relating to the inner workings of imperial government. This material ranged from the laws compiled in the *Codex Theodosianus* and *Novellae*, the records from the three major ecclesiastical councils held at Ephesus in 431 and 449, and in Chalcedon in 451, contemporary narrative histories, and the substantial letter collections.<sup>29</sup> By detailing the complex nature of the late Roman government, Millar challenged the dominant perception of Theodosius II as a ‘shadowy figure’ within his administration.<sup>30</sup> Moreover, Millar suggested that for the first ten years of Theodosius II’s reign, whilst he was still a child, a wider group of people, particularly members of the Consistory, successfully administered the Empire in his name.<sup>31</sup> However, he argued that upon his growth to adulthood in the 420s the emperor had a more active, or at least identifiable, presence within his government.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Bury 1889: 1.125; 1923: 1.215.

<sup>26</sup> Jones 1964: 1.173.

<sup>27</sup> For this ongoing negative interpretation see: Harries 1992: 35; Harries 1993; Holum 1982: 130; Honoré 1998: 97; McCormick 2001: 143; Norwich 1988: 139.

<sup>28</sup> Codification of Roman Law: CTh 1.1.5, 1.1.6. School in Constantinople: Traina 2013: 161. Theodosian Walls: CIL III 7404; CTh 15.1.51; Soc. 7.1.

<sup>29</sup> Millar 2006: 1-38, 130, 152.

<sup>30</sup> Harries 1992: 35 for quote.

<sup>31</sup> Millar 2006: 208.

<sup>32</sup> Millar 2006: 208-214, 228-234.

The 2009 essay, “Imperial Politics at the Court of Theodosius II,” by Hugh Elton followed and expanded upon Millar’s work. Throughout his essay, Elton discussed evidence relating to the decision-making process within Theodosius II’s court and questioned the validity of the ancient accounts that described the emperor as dominated by women, eunuchs, or barbarian generals.<sup>33</sup> He concluded that the dominant model in scholarly literature of ‘focusing on any single individual influencing the emperor also ignores the effects of the remaining representatives of the government.’<sup>34</sup> Though there were many key players in the governing of the Empire throughout Theodosius II’s reign, Elton also noted that we should not see this emperor either as a cipher or as a non-acting survivor.<sup>35</sup> By referencing multiple episodes that suggest Theodosius II was actively aware of the manoeuvring that took place around him, Elton showed that the emperor held more control within his court and firmly understood the machinations of his government.<sup>36</sup>

The final crucial work of recent re-evaluations of Theodosius II’s reign is the collection of essays edited by Christopher Kelly and published in 2013. This work, entitled *Theodosius II: Rethinking the Roman Empire*, contains ten essays that further extend the ongoing re-examination of Theodosius II and his Empire. Divided into three main sections, (i) the complex workings of the imperial court, (ii) the flourishing literary and cultural circles, and (iii) the power of public piety, this work demonstrated that ‘the reign of Theodosius II should not be too quickly dismissed, simplified, or partitioned.’<sup>37</sup> Kelly highlighted throughout his detailed introduction that due to the abundance of surviving source material, Theodosius II’s reign offers invaluable insights into the workings of imperial administration and court politics.<sup>38</sup> Though it is for this reason, Kelly concluded, that past scholars have been so critical of this emperor. He stated that if the same amount of information survived from Constantine’s reign prior to the battle of the Milvian Bridge or the Council of Nicaea, or before Theodosius I’s two campaigns against Western usurpers, these moments would not be dominated by an individual personality.<sup>39</sup> Moreover, he argued that the level of information that survived from Theodosius

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<sup>33</sup> Elton 2009: 135.

<sup>34</sup> Elton 2009: 137.

<sup>35</sup> Elton 2009: 137, 142.

<sup>36</sup> Some episodes include: CTh 12.12.15 (415); *ACOec.* 1.1.1 nr.20 (430); *ACOec.* 1.4, nr.212 (433); Joh. Mal. 14.15-16 (440). Elton 2009: 133, 137.

<sup>37</sup> Kelly 2013a: 6-7, 64.

<sup>38</sup> Kelly 2013a: 62.

<sup>39</sup> Kelly 2013a: 20-21.

II's reign does not indicate a substantial change in court politics in the fifth century nor the ineffectiveness of the ruler in question.<sup>40</sup> Therefore, it is for this reason that the long-held uninspiring view of an indecisive, dominated, and weak emperor should be re-examined and the emperor's presence within his wider regime re-assessed.

### *Imperial Family*

Early examination of the political history of Theodosius II's reign has usually focused on the overwhelming influence of the emperor's eldest sister, Pulcheria, and his wife, Eudocia.<sup>41</sup> Although both women were prominent in imperial presentation, their role in government has been overstated. Kenneth Holum's *Theodosian Empresses: Women and Imperial Dominion in Late Antiquity* was the first important work in 1982 to highlight the development of imperial women in public iconography during the Theodosian Dynasty. By analysing the Eastern Theodosian women chronologically, beginning with wife of Theodosius I, Aelia Flaccilla, and concluding with Eudocia, Holum outlined these progressive changes during this seventy-year period. He showed their enhanced position in imperial presentation through their repeated elevation to Augustae – a title sporadically used in the fourth century – and their continual presence on official media, such as coins, wearing symbols of imperial authority.<sup>42</sup> However significant it has been in highlighting the importance of this period for the development of women in imperial iconography, an obvious shortcoming in Holum's work is the overstated position of Pulcheria and Eudocia in the official administration of the Empire. In over-emphasising their role within the government, Holum described Theodosius II as a weak ruler who was dominated and controlled by those around him. His depiction of the relationship between Theodosius II and his women became so influential that many other modern scholars followed his conclusions.<sup>43</sup>

Jill Harries' contribution to Kelly's 2013 edited collection questioned Holum's perception of the Theodosian women. Building mainly on Millar's work on the Eastern government, Harries' essay, "Men without Women: Theodosius' Consistory and the Business of Government," re-evaluated the role of Pulcheria and, by extension, Eudocia in official government proceedings.

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<sup>40</sup> Kelly 2013a: 21.

<sup>41</sup> Beginning with Gibbon 1781: 3.263-265; Bury 1889: 1.123; Jones 1964: 1.173.

<sup>42</sup> Holum 1982: 29-34.

<sup>43</sup> For example: Chew 2006; Connor 2004; Dietz 2005; Honoré 1998; James 2001: 42; Norwich 1988. Klein 2011/2012: 85 n.1 writing on Eudocia stated that the image of Theodosius II who was largely influenced by others has to be reconsidered.

In this essay, Harries analysed literary sources either filled with flattery for these two women or distorted due to comparisons with more high-profile examples, such as Theodora in the sixth century. She has shown that though some ancient works account for their involvement in imperial administration, their omission from consistory proceedings and their inability to personally issue laws suggests neither women held an official position within the Eastern government.<sup>44</sup> Importantly, Harries did not devalue the prominent and public role Pulcheria and Eudocia played throughout Theodosius II's reign. However, like all women up to this period, their influence 'stopped at the consistory door.'<sup>45</sup> Therefore, by further extending her conclusions from an earlier essay entitled "*Pius Princeps: Theodosius II and Fifth-Century Constantinople*," Harries highlighted the important role these women played in promoting the piety of the imperial family. Though in both essays Harries questioned the validity of Theodosius II's presence within his government, she has shown the overwhelming importance of pious acts in the public image of his regime.<sup>46</sup>

Re-examining the role of imperial women in the public life of an imperial capital is the topic of Dilia Angelova's 2015 book, *Sacred Founders: Women, Men, and Gods in the Discourse of Imperial Founding, Rome through Early Byzantium*. Her work, which assessed the place of imperial women in a regime's public image, has shown the active and largely independent role of these women within the public sphere of Roman society. Beginning with Augustus and Livia, Angelova outlined how they were identified as founding figures through their numerous building programs, benefactions and connections to deities.<sup>47</sup> Angelova then highlighted the adaptation of this idea with the advent of Christianity.<sup>48</sup> Her conclusions were built mainly on Leslie Brubaker's essay, "Memories of Helena: Patterns in Imperial Female Matronage in the Fourth and Fifth Centuries," which examined the association between Helena, mother of Constantine, and the pious acts of imperial women in the later fourth and fifth centuries.<sup>49</sup> Therefore, in analysing how Helena's pious acts of constructing churches, buildings and other cities helped to legitimate her son's new religious ideology throughout the Empire, Angelova

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<sup>44</sup> Harries 2013:67-69. For Theodora's influence, see Herrin 2001: 4-5.

<sup>45</sup> Harries 2013: 72. James 2001: 67, 84-88 also discussed this topic and the concept of 'power behind the throne'. Though she did conclude that Pulcheria's power was primarily regulated to religious activities, she did continue to perpetuate the image of a powerful empress overshadowing the emperor.

<sup>46</sup> For her negative view of Theodosius II see Harries 1992: 35-37; Harries 2013: 68-69, 78-79. For the importance of piety, see Harries 1992: 38-40, 43-44; Harries 2013: 73, 88-89.

<sup>47</sup> Angelova 2015: 9-43.

<sup>48</sup> Angelova 2015: 111-146 (Helena and Constantine), 205-218 (Christian tradition).

<sup>49</sup> Brubaker 1997: esp. 52-63.

further outlined this empress' role in establishing the precedent for future Christian imperial women.<sup>50</sup> She addressed the role of both Pulcheria and Eudocia within this framework and highlighted the contribution of Theodosius II's two lesser-known sisters, Arcadia and Marina.<sup>51</sup> Therefore, by examining the actions of all the Eastern Theodosian women, Angelova has shown the public presence of the entire imperial family within the city of Constantinople.

This thesis will build on the conclusions of these main re-evaluations of Theodosius II and his family. Though this thesis does not seek to ascertain the emperor's role within his government, Millar and Elton's examinations of Theodosius II's participation in his administration are important when considering his wider involvement in the development of his public image. By utilising their description of an adult emperor actively involved in the management of his officials and courtiers, this thesis will determine Theodosius II's contribution in presenting his public image to the people of Constantinople. Moreover, though Harries' work removed the Eastern Theodosian women from the political sphere of government, their image, for the majority of Theodosius II's reign, was highly politicised. Therefore, this thesis will further her conclusions to determine how the ostentatious public piety of these women was fundamental in the early establishment of the Eastern imperial image and how their constant displays of piety contributed to the overall image of the regime. Finally, by furthering the works of Brubaker, Angelova and other scholars, this thesis will highlight the presence of the entire Eastern Theodosian family in this image and their active participation in its ongoing presentation.

### 2.3 Imperial Ceremonial

For Theodosius II, imperial ceremonial, which encompassed both secular and religious events, was one of the most important modes of communication between the imperial family and the populace of his city. Within modern scholarship, two influential works outlined the importance of ceremonies in Late Antiquity more generally. Sabine MacCormack's 1981 *Art and Ceremony in Late Antiquity* and Michael McCormick's 1986 *Eternal Victory: Triumphal Rulership in Late Antiquity, Byzantium, and the Early Medieval West* have analysed the development and increasing importance of ceremonies throughout multiple centuries. MacCormack traced the transformation of traditional pagan ceremonial practices into Christian

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<sup>50</sup> Angelova 2015: 4-6, 111-146.

<sup>51</sup> Angelova 2015: 148-157.

practises through accession, *adventus* and funerary ceremonies from the Tetrarchic period to the reign of Theodosius I.<sup>52</sup> Though her analysis mainly ended with the death of Theodosius I, MacCormack did briefly mention the growing importance of Constantinople as the Eastern ceremonial capital in the later fifth century. However, she did so by omitting the reigns of Arcadius and Theodosius II.<sup>53</sup> McCormick's work detailed the progressive development of triumphal ceremonies in the Roman and post-Roman worlds and outlined the changes implemented to benefit non-campaigning emperors.<sup>54</sup> Moreover, he examined the uniformity in victory ceremonials between the divided Empires during the fifth century, stating that any victory won in one-half of the Empire was celebrated in the other.<sup>55</sup> Through his progressive analysis, McCormick outlined the traditional framework of victory ceremonies in Late Antiquity and briefly mentioned times when they deviated.

The works of MacCormack and McCormick significantly contributed to the study of Late Antique ceremonial and our understanding of the traditional structure of these events. However, neither work dealt specifically with Theodosius II and his reign, recognised his contribution to the ongoing development of imperial ceremonial, nor the significant importance of Constantinople itself in these events. Therefore, for Theodosius II's involvement in imperial ceremonial, this thesis extends the findings of Christopher Kelly's 2013 essay "Stooping to Conquer: The Power of Imperial Humility." In this work, Kelly examined the distinctly Christian virtue of humility, the power in publicly relinquishing imperial authority, and the challenges involved in its successful portrayal. He utilised an episode from the final years of Theodosius II's reign to show not only the ability of this imperial virtue to re-assert an emperor's authority, but also Theodosius II's ability to perform successfully on a public stage.<sup>56</sup> Just as Millar and Elton's earlier works examined the validity of the long-held view of Theodosius II as an inactive ruler, Kelly's essay questioned whether an inept emperor could successfully perform an act so easily misunderstood or deliberately misread by the watching crowd.<sup>57</sup> Similar to the former works, which assessed Theodosius II's involvement in the government, Kelly's essay examined the emperor's personal presence during ceremonial events in Constantinople. Therefore, his analysis of Theodosius II provides the foundational

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<sup>52</sup> MacCormack 1981: 17-45.

<sup>53</sup> MacCormack 1981: 240-259.

<sup>54</sup> McCormick 1986: 47-60.

<sup>55</sup> McCormick 1986: 120-130.

<sup>56</sup> Kelly 2013b: 228-230.

<sup>57</sup> Kelly 2013b: 243. For times humility was misunderstood or misread, see Kelly 2013b: 241-424.

basis for this thesis' examination of the emperor's long-term presentation in imperial ceremonial.

This thesis also draws on the scholarship relating to the development of Constantinople as the Eastern imperial capital and the progressive construction of the city's ceremonial landscape during the Theodosian Dynasty. Franz Alto Bauer's 2001 essay, "Urban Space and Ritual: Constantinople in Late Antiquity," addressed this topic and outlined the reciprocal growth of public spaces and imperial ceremonial in the city. Moreover, his work highlighted the prominent role of the Hippodrome in the communication and connection between the emperor and his people.<sup>58</sup> Sarah Basset's 2004 book, *The Urban Image of Late Antique Constantinople*, continued Bauer's analysis. Beginning with a study of Constantine's attempt at recreating *romanitas* in his new eastern city, Basset then argued that the Theodosian emperors continued Constantine's work, though with the distinct purpose of constructing monuments for dynastic promotion and legitimation.<sup>59</sup> Her conclusions on the Theodosian emperors were furthered by Brian Croke in his 2010 essay, "Reinventing Constantinople: Theodosius I's Imprint on the Imperial City." In this essay, Croke traced the swift monumental and ceremonial developments within the city after Theodosius I's arrival in 380. He highlighted the transformation of Constantinople from a transit camp for emperors into a monumental imperial city, the importance of civic acceptance that resulted from the almost permanent imperial presence in the city and the substantial list of annually celebrated ceremonies.<sup>60</sup> Moreover, Croke argued that the constant imperial presence in both secular and ecclesiastical ceremonies not only connected the emperor to the aristocracy, clergy, and populace, but also provided him a further avenue of portraying his power.<sup>61</sup> The aforementioned forthcoming essay by Meaghan McEvoy on the emperor Arcadius continued Croke's conclusions and importantly highlighted this emperor's role in further implementing the innovations of Theodosius I and securing the emperor's public presence in Constantinople.<sup>62</sup>

The final key work utilised in the discussion of imperial ceremonial is Peter Van Nuffelen's 2012 essay, "Playing the Ritual Game in Constantinople (379-457)." In this essay, which covered the entire Theodosian Dynasty, Van Nuffelen investigated the effects of long-term

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<sup>58</sup> Bauer 2001: 37.

<sup>59</sup> Basset 2004: 22-33, 97.

<sup>60</sup> Croke 2010: 241-246.

<sup>61</sup> Croke 2010: 255, 264.

<sup>62</sup> McEvoy forthcoming 2019a.

imperial presence in Constantinople – namely how it affected the emperor’s relationship with the citizenry and clergy, and how it was used as a means of gathering influence and prestige. He importantly noted that imperial ceremonial did not guarantee the support of the city. Rather, he suggested that the risks were actually raised: if they lost support, the Theodosian emperors had to regain acceptance from the same audience.<sup>63</sup> Van Nuffelen further highlighted the unpredictability of these ceremonial events – even though imperial ceremonials were highly organised occasions, the actions of the crowds could not be controlled. As such, these emperors had to possess the ability to perform on a public stage and to act and react favourably to unscripted moments.<sup>64</sup> Finally, Van Nuffelen’s essay is important for this study as he highlighted the influence and prestige that was awarded through successful performances and, as such, the growing competition between the emperor and clergymen as the central figure in ecclesiastical events. He argued that by supplanting the bishop of the city as the primary focus in ecclesiastical processions, the Theodosian family did not wish to be seen as members of the clergy, but rather as the epitome of religious piety.<sup>65</sup> To do all this effectively, on numerous occasions, required a more involved emperor: a description that does not fit the traditional image of Theodosius II, but aligns with the re-evaluation in the works of scholars such as Millar and Elton.

#### 2.4 East/West Relations

The relationship between the East and the West during the fifth century has been constantly studied in modern scholarship, not least because of the Empire’s permanent dual courts in the Eastern and Western halves of the Empire after 395 and the ‘fall of the West’ only eighty years later. For sixty of those years, the Theodosian Dynasty ruled both halves of the Roman Empire. Early scholarship on the relationship between the two courts has concluded that the East was largely indifferent to the crisis in the West.<sup>66</sup> However, these early investigations have neglected the numerous examples of Eastern intervention into Western affairs.<sup>67</sup> Therefore, this thesis utilises the conclusions brought forth in Walter Emil Kaegi’s book, *Byzantium and the Decline of Rome*. By examining contemporary Eastern literary and numismatic evidence, Kaegi showed the close ties between Theodosius II and his two Western counterparts –

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<sup>63</sup> Van Nuffelen 2012: 186.

<sup>64</sup> Van Nuffelen 2012: 192-193.

<sup>65</sup> Van Nuffelen 2012: 193-200.

<sup>66</sup> Bury 1923: 1.302 n2; Blockley 1992; Goffart 1981.

<sup>67</sup> For a discussion of these examples throughout the fifth century, see McEvoy 2014.



Honorius and Valentinian III.<sup>68</sup> Moreover, Fergus Millar's aforementioned book further Kaegi's conclusions in his exploration of the relationship between the two Empires. He stated that though separation did occur at this time, neither Empire was indifferent to the other, but rather acted as closely linked twin Empires.<sup>69</sup> As McEvoy highlighted, this presentation of imperial unity was shown through a strong Eastern commitment to Western affairs displayed most prominently through continual military and administrative support, and dynastic alliances.<sup>70</sup>

Andrew Gillett in his 1993 essay, "The Date and Circumstances of Olympiodorus of Thebes," furthered Kaegi's conclusions and examined the intense co-operation between the two Empires beginning with the efforts to install Valentinian III onto the Western throne in 424. Gillett also highlighted the role of the Eastern diplomat and historian, Olympiodorus of Thebes, in contributing to the image of a superior Eastern Empire protecting its weaker Western counterpart. He concluded that Olympiodorus' history, which recounted the events of the West between 407 until 425, was published fifteen years after its conclusion in 440 or soon thereafter.<sup>71</sup> Gillett outlined that his history, which was read only in the East, was published after the marriage of Valentinian III to Theodosius II's daughter, Licinia Eudoxia, and the promulgation of the Theodosian Code.<sup>72</sup> As such, he argued that the work, taken together with the marriage and codification of Roman law, publicly reinforced the superior position of the Eastern government and their influential role in establishing and protecting the Western court and Empire.<sup>73</sup>

Peter Van Nuffelen's 2013 essay, "Olympiodorus of Thebes and Eastern Triumphalism," also assessed the role of Olympiodorus' history in contributing to the contemporary image of Eastern superiority. Contesting Gillett, however, Van Nuffelen has argued that the Eastern diplomat published his work soon after the conclusion of the history in 425 and before 427. By placing the publication of this work soon after the events, Van Nuffelen argued that the history depicted the triumphal re-assertion of the superior East over the West after years of

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<sup>68</sup> Kaegi 1968: 16-29. Jones 1964: 1.182-194 first questioned this tradition – though briefly.

<sup>69</sup> Millar 2006: 5.

<sup>70</sup> McEvoy 2014.

<sup>71</sup> Gillett 1993: 2, 9.

<sup>72</sup> Gillett 1993: 2-17. Gillett 1993: 21 also highlighted the title of Code was not a modern name, but one given to it by the Eastern emperor himself.

<sup>73</sup> Gillett 1993: 20-25.

animosity.<sup>74</sup> When read in this air of ‘Eastern triumphalism’ Van Nuffelen has shown that Olympiodorus highlighted the failures of the West in what the East perceived as their strengths, such as the choice of virginity over marriage.<sup>75</sup> By presenting the events as such, the author ensured that the Eastern court and the actions of the imperial family set the standard for others to follow.<sup>76</sup> Though differing in their opinion on the publication of this work, both Gillett and Van Nuffelen have highlighted Olympiodorus’ contribution to the image of a stable and prosperous Eastern Empire and imperial family protecting their weaker Western counterpart. As such, this thesis relies on their interpretation of Olympiodorus’ history in assessing other Eastern sources portraying Theodosius II’s intervention in the West.

This thesis also builds on the assessment of Theodosius II’s presentation from 423 onwards in Meaghan McEvoy’s aforementioned work on Western child-emperors. In this work, McEvoy outlined the continual assertion of Theodosius II as the senior more fatherly member of the imperial college during his rule with Western emperor, Valentinian III (425-450). She showed that this image was adapted to coincide with the growth of the young emperor and that the marriage to Licinia Eudoxia and the promulgation of the Theodosius Code in 437 further formalised this image.<sup>77</sup> Though McEvoy provided the framework for understanding Theodosius II’s presentation at this time, her work was based primarily in the West. As such, her assessment traced the establishment of Valentinian III’s own imperial image and included prominent Western generals, such as Boniface and Aetius.<sup>78</sup> In contrast, this thesis approaches Theodosius II’s portrayal from an Eastern perspective to examine how his presentation in the East altered throughout these years.

## 2.5 Ancient Sources – Strengths and Limitations

One of the most remarkable aspects of Theodosius II’s reign is the amount of surviving source material relating to this forty-two-year period with an ancient corpus of evidence ranging from ecclesiastical and secular histories to chronicles, legal documents, letters, inscriptions, and coins. This thesis relies heavily on material evidence, primarily numismatic and epigraphic, and literary evidence, mainly histories and chronicles, ranging from contemporary accounts until the ninth century, for reconstructing Theodosius II’s imperial presentation in the city of

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<sup>74</sup> Van Nuffelen 2013: 130, 133.

<sup>75</sup> Van Nuffelen 2013: 134.

<sup>76</sup> Van Nuffelen 2013: 135.

<sup>77</sup> McEvoy 2013: 256-258.

<sup>78</sup> McEvoy 2013: 251-273.

Constantinople. This thesis also utilises legislative evidence to explore this image, though only when it directly relates to specific events discussed throughout the three case studies. As such, the various strengths and limitations for each major source utilised in this study needs to be addressed.

The surviving material evidence relating to Theodosius II's reign, namely coinage and inscriptions, are used in this thesis to examine the contemporary portrayal of the public image of the imperial family and its progressive transformation through time. As such, the question of agency, intent, and motive behind the production of this material must be considered. There is no clear scholarly consensus on who designed and produced imperial coinage.<sup>79</sup> This is mainly due to the limited information regarding the inner working of the mint in the imperial capital.<sup>80</sup> For example, by the Severan period, numerous positions within the imperial mint can be detected: a *procurator monetae*, who had overall authority over the imperial mint, their secretary, *a rationibus*, seemingly responsible for determining the total output of coinage, and *triumviri monetales* or 'moneyers', who may have chosen the designs.<sup>81</sup> Outside these official positions, there are also sporadic references within the literary evidence to suggest emperors were involved in the selection of some designs.<sup>82</sup> However, as it has been shown, these references are too irregular to suggest a consistent pattern of an emperor's involvement.<sup>83</sup> For this study in particular, there is no literary evidence indicating Theodosius II, either during his youth or as an adult, was actively involved in his mint designs. However, despite our lack of concrete knowledge on the official agents behind the selection of coin types, it is important to stress that those associated with the imperial mint were selected by members of the central administration and as such acted on behalf of the regime to present its official image to the world.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> For conflicting ideas, assessments and reassessments on coins, see Howgego 1990; Jones 1979; Levick 1982; Metcalf 2006; Noreña 2011a, 2011b; Sutherland 1951, 1986; Wallace-Hadrill 1986. For inscriptions, see Davenport 2014: 45-59; Davenport 2016: 382-383; Noreña 2011a: 215-219.

<sup>80</sup> Noreña 2011a: 191. Though works utilised below deal primarily with Roman imperial coinage ranging from the late first century BC until the third century AD and primarily from the mint in Rome, their conclusions still correlate to fifth century imperial coinage minted at Constantinople.

<sup>81</sup> Levick 1982: 108, 1999: 44; Noreña 2011a: 191, 2011b: 250. Cf. Sutherland 1986 and Wallace-Hadrill 1986

<sup>82</sup> Suet. *Aug.* 94.12, *Nero* 25.2; Euseb. *Vit. Const.* 4.15.1; Soc. 3.17; Soz. 5.19. Noreña 2011b: 250.

<sup>83</sup> Wolters 1999: 262-264 followed by Noreña 2011b: 250.

<sup>84</sup> Davenport 2014: 46; Noreña 2011a: 192; Rowan 2011: 243. Metcalf 2006: 42 has highlighted that regardless of who was in-charge of the mint, no coin portrayed an emperor negatively.

The questions of intent behind the selection of coin types, the portrayal of the emperor and empress(s), and the motive for their dissemination are important for understanding the purpose of these coins and their overall impact in promoting the image of a regime. Barbara Levick produced an interesting theory on this topic, stating that those who controlled coin types would have selected images that ‘flattered the current *princeps* and showed him the self he wished to see.’<sup>85</sup> Through this hypothesis, Levick supposed an inward purpose – that is, pleasing the emperor – for these coins. Though a fascinating argument and the pleasure of the emperor would have been an influencing factor in the final selection of coin designs, Levick’s article did not closely consider the overall purpose of Roman coinage – state expenditure concentrated towards military camps and urban cities.<sup>86</sup> Therefore, it can be assumed that the residents of these areas were the primary target for messages on imperial coinage. It has also been concluded that by the Severan period, imperial women received their own independent mint dedicated to producing and disseminating their image on coinage.<sup>87</sup> However, it would be incorrect to assume, as Levick has shown, that imperial women has a direct role in their representation on coinage.<sup>88</sup> Rather, their presentation should be considered in associated with, rather than independent of their male counterpart, the emperor.

Though understanding imperial portrayal on official coinage is important for understanding the ideology of a regime, Noreña has rightly pointed out that they should not be considered in isolation, but alongside other types of material produced by the state.<sup>89</sup> As such, both epigraphic material erected by officials associated with the central government, and legislative documents, written either by the emperor or on his behalf, should be assessed alongside central coinage to explore the overall image of the regime.<sup>90</sup> The presentation of Theodosius II and his family on statues and inscriptions placed in the imperial city are examined in this thesis. Imperial monuments produced by the central state offer an insight into the most important virtues associated with the ruling emperor.<sup>91</sup> Therefore, the praise and veneration ascribed to

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<sup>85</sup> Levick 1982: 108, 1999: 44.

<sup>86</sup> Noreña 2011a: 194, 2011b: 248-249; Sutherland 1986: 93. Levick 1982 did concede that imperial coinage did have a wider audience, but the opinion of the emperor was the most important aspect in type selection.

<sup>87</sup> Duncan-Jones 2006: 223 notes that these changes began during Hadrian’s reign (117-138). Followed by Rowan 2011.

<sup>88</sup> Levick 2007: 140; Rowan 2011: 267.

<sup>89</sup> Noreña 2011a: 197-198, 2011b: 261.

<sup>90</sup> For discussion of Theodosius II and laws, see Harries 1999: 36-55; Honoré 1998: 97-175. Cf. Millar 2006.

<sup>91</sup> Davenport 2016: 383.

the emperor on this media formed part of what Mayer termed ‘panegyric milieu.’<sup>92</sup> Of the numerous statues and epigraphic monuments attributed to Theodosius II and his family within Constantinople, only one survives to the present day.<sup>93</sup> The analysis of the surviving monumental inscription base, which once held a victory column and a statue of the emperor, will further contribute to understanding the official image of Theodosius II and his family disseminated from the central regime.

The final piece of official media examined in this thesis is the legislative material compiled in the Theodosian Code. The Edicts of 429 and 435, which announced the Eastern project to codify Roman law and outlined its formation, are the two main legal texts studied in this thesis. Though both edicts were compiled in Constantinople, presented to the Constantinopolitan Senate, and written in the name of the emperors, Theodosius II and Valentinian III, we cannot state with any certainty their role in its production.<sup>94</sup> However, as this thesis does not seek to determine Theodosius II’s role in his government, his contribution in the formulation of this material does not need to be deeply considered. Moreover, this thesis also examines the speech given by Western official, Anicius Acilius Glabrio Faustus, to the Senate at Rome. As the Prefect of the City announcing the ratification of the Theodosian Code in the West, his speech will highlight the Western perspective of Theodosius II’s official image

Ecclesiastical historians contemporaneous to the mid-fifth century are utilised to examine the earliest reception of Theodosius II and his family’s public image. Three main works will be assessed: Socrates, who completed his work soon after 439; Sozomen, who wrote soon after in the mid-440s; and Theodoret, who published his ecclesiastical history by the late-440s.<sup>95</sup> All three authors followed the work of Eusebius and wrote on the history of the church from Constantine to Theodosius II.<sup>96</sup> Though similar in their general theme, all three works highlighted different components of the imperial image and Theodosius II’s public behaviour.

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<sup>92</sup> Mayer 2006: 144 followed by Davenport 2016: 383.

<sup>93</sup> LSA 31 = AE 1947, 185. Other statues attributed to the emperor and his family survive in literary sources such as *Chronicon Paschale*, *The Patria* and *Parastaseis Syntomoi Chronikai*. Davenport 2014: 61 n.121.

<sup>94</sup> CTh 1.15 (Edict of 429); CTh 1.1.6 (Edict of 435). However, perhaps we can state with more certainty that the ten-year-old Valentinian III was not involved.

<sup>95</sup> Gardiner 2013: 245 (Socrates); Liebeschuetz 1993: 155 (Socrates and Sozomen), 156 (Theodoret); Nobbs 1994 (Sozomen and Theodoret); Urbainczyk 1997a: 19-20 (Socrates).

<sup>96</sup> Socrates’ history concluded in 439, Sozomen, perhaps unfinished, ended shortly after 425, and Theodoret, who only wrote specifically on one event during Theodosius II’s reign, dated to 438. Urbainczyk 1997b: 358; Urbainczyk 2002: 30.

Socrates, who was born, raised and educated in Constantinople, remained in the city for the entirety of Theodosius II's reign. As such, his description of the emperor and his family provides us with an eyewitness account of their public behaviour within the city and his interpretation of the regime's image.<sup>97</sup> As Luke Gardiner has recently pointed out, Socrates' history is invaluable to the study of Theodosius II's reign, as his work, unlike his other contemporaries Sozomen and Theodoret, offered a detailed account of his rule.<sup>98</sup> His description of the emperor's actions during imperial ceremonies clearly suggests he was an active participant in the dissemination of his image. Therefore, through the examination of Socrates' portrayal of Theodosius II, one can see the correlation between the public image of the regime and the emperor's behaviour in Constantinople.

Whereas Socrates focused closely on the emperor's primary role in the continuous re-assertion of the regime's public image, Sozomen, who arrived in the capital sometime after 425, highlighted the unity of the core Eastern Theodosian family – that is, Theodosius II and his three sisters – in promulgating the image of piety.<sup>99</sup> Dedicating his work to the emperor, Sozomen's account provides an independent insight into how the image of familial unity, which was established in 414, remained a primary component in the public image of the ruling family throughout four decades. By analysing Socrates and Sozomen together, there emerges a connection between the official image of the regime and public behaviour of the imperial family. However, both accounts offer some limitations in their presentations of the imperial family, shown through their over-emphasis or omission of key members of the Theodosian house. Socrates, for example, completed his history in late 439 or early 440 soon after Pulcheria retired to the Hebdomon palace and at a time considered by some as Eudocia's ascendancy.<sup>100</sup> As such, the author completely omitted Pulcheria's name from his history, only alluding to her presence collectively with her sisters. Through this omission, Socrates neglected the prominent and public role she played throughout Theodosius II's reign and her unique image during his formative years. Conversely, Sozomen, who wrote his history after Eudocia's permanent move to Jerusalem in 441, completely neglected this empress in his work. In addition to the laudatory preface addressed to Theodosius II, Book Nine of his history ostentatiously emphasised the role of Pulcheria and, to a lesser extent her two sisters, in the

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<sup>97</sup> Socrates was born circa 380, Gardiner 2013: 245; Urbainczyk 1997a: 17-19.

<sup>98</sup> Gardiner 2013: 245.

<sup>99</sup> Chesnut 1986: 201.

<sup>100</sup> See Chew 2006: 220; Holum 1982: 114-115, 189-192.

public image of the regime.<sup>101</sup> Therefore, it is through his detailed exploration of Pulcheria, made perhaps in reaction to her omission in Socrates' account or her position as the only Augusta residing near Constantinople – albeit outside the city walls at the Hebdomon – that has led some scholars to over-emphasise her role within the official government.<sup>102</sup>

In contrast to his two near contemporaries, Theodoret was a member of the clergy, appointed bishop of Cyrrhus in 423, and resided near Antioch throughout his long life.<sup>103</sup> His history officially ended with Theodosius II's accession to full Augustus in 408. However, there survives one detailed episode describing the reinterment of John Chrysostom in 438. Therefore, his work offers a non-Constantinopolitan perspective on Eastern emperor's public image. As a resident of Antioch, it can be assumed that Theodoret did not personally witness any event in Constantinople in which he related. However, as he can be attested in the city at times during Theodosius II's reign and presumably saw numerous images of the imperial family in circulation throughout the Empire, one can conclude his description of the imperial family was based largely on these interactions.<sup>104</sup> Despite his lack of personal interaction with the imperial family during public performances in Constantinople, his portrayal of them closely aligned with Socrates and Sozomen's accounts, as the Antiochene author highlighted the role of piety in the stability of Theodosius II's reign.<sup>105</sup> Though their uniformity in detailing the piety of the ruling family might be expected due to the genre of their histories that it closely linked with the material evidence disseminated from the central regime suggests a consistency in this public presentation.

This thesis also utilises the now fragmentary contemporary narrative histories collated in R. C. Blockley's *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians of the Later Roman Empire: Eunapius, Olympiodorus, Priscus and Malchus*.<sup>106</sup> As we have already seen, Olympiodorus of Thebes was an Eastern court official who wrote a history of the West from 407 to 425, with a publication date of either late 420s or early 440s.<sup>107</sup> Similar to Sozomen, the official dedicated his history to the Eastern emperor and throughout the work highlighted the strength and

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<sup>101</sup> Whitby 2013: 205-206.

<sup>102</sup> See the above discussion of Theodosius II dominated by women present in the early scholarship by Gibbon, Bury and Jones and continued by Holum 1982 and Chew 2006 and their counter arguments in Harries 1992, 2013.

<sup>103</sup> Urbainczyk 2002: 10-11, 14-21.

<sup>104</sup> For his presence in Constantinople soon after the close of the First Council of Ephesus, see Wessel 2001: 295-296.

<sup>105</sup> Whitby 2013: 2017.

<sup>106</sup> Blockley 1983.

<sup>107</sup> Van Nuffelen 2013: 130, 133 (earlier date); Gillett 1993: 2, 9 (later date). See above for discussion.

stability of this ruling family. Therefore, all four Eastern sources examined thus far present differing levels of Eastern superiority, especially in relation to the West, and positive portrayals of the imperial family. This strong Eastern perspective may cause some scholars to question their overall impartiality concerning the events they related. However, as this thesis primarily explores Theodosius II's presentation in Eastern sources, this image of a triumphant emperor and empire provides insights into the contemporary image produced by the central regime in Constantinople.

Despite this overwhelmingly positive description of the emperor and his family, there is one final contemporary author included in Blockley's *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians*, who presented an underwhelming portrayal of Theodosius II. Priscus of Panium, who wrote a military history of the East between 433 and circa 474, produced an image of the emperor as unwarlike, cowardly, and controlled by women and eunuchs.<sup>108</sup> Considered an authoritative historian on the military history on which he wrote, his image of the emperor has reverberated throughout early modern investigations of the reign.<sup>109</sup> However, it is important to note that despite his popularity with modern scholars, Priscus' description of Theodosius II was not the dominant view upheld by later Byzantine authors. Seemingly the outlier within the abundant source material, his personal perspective of Theodosius II's reign does not represent, nor should it be considered, the authority on the successfulness of this emperor's rule.

In order to explore the long-term reception of Theodosius II and his reign, this thesis also utilises Eastern chronicle histories compiled between the sixth and ninth centuries. As such, it mainly employs the sixth century chronicles of Marcellinus *comes* and John Malalas, the anonymous seventh century *Chronicon Paschale* and John of Nikiu, and Theophanes who wrote in the early ninth century.<sup>110</sup> For the majority of these works, their sources can ultimately be traced to the contemporary histories, via further intermediaries, mentioned above. However, there are numerous limitations associated with these works. First is the sometimes scarce details recorded alongside an event. Some chronicles, Marcellinus *comes*, for example, recorded only the event and the date on which it occurred, omitting all other information. John

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<sup>108</sup> For dating see, Blockley 1981: 50-51; Greatrex et al. 1996: 187; Jones 1964: 1.170; McEvoy 2013: 14. That this image of Theodosius II, which survived in the tenth century Byzantine encyclopaedia, *Suda* Θ 145, derived from Priscus' history, see Blockley 1981: 64-65; Elton 2009: 135; Lee 2013a: 92.

<sup>109</sup> Blockley 1981: 68-69; Kelly 2008.

<sup>110</sup> Burgess 1993/1994: 55 (John Malalas circa 532, *Chronicon Paschale* circa 630), 57 (Theophanes circa 814-815); Croke 1983: 87 (Marcellinus *comes* after 534); Watts 2013 (John of Nikiu late-seventh century).



Malalas and the *Chronicon Paschale*, following Malalas' tradition, offers, at times, a romanticised account of key events – such as the marriage of Theodosius II to Eudocia and her retirement to Jerusalem.<sup>111</sup> Finally, the theological beliefs of these writers also highlight the limitations of these works. John of Nikiu was a believer of the non-Chalcedonian tradition and as such, his presentation of Pulcheria, a staunch upholder of the Chalcedonian faith, was extremely hostile.<sup>112</sup> Comparatively, Theophanes was a Chalcedonian supporter and as such over-idealised Pulcheria's role.<sup>113</sup> Finally, the separation in time between these works and Theodosius II's reign would cause any researcher to question the historicity of otherwise unrecorded events. However, as the long-term literary reception of Theodosius II is an important component of this thesis, it is their portrayal of the emperor and his family, rather than the overall reliability of the histories, that is of primary importance.

### 3.1 Methodology

Through the analysis of imperial presentation, ceremonial and literary reception in three case studies, this thesis seeks to consider how the public image of the Eastern Theodosian regime contributed to the stability and prosperity of Theodosius II's forty-two-year reign. Imperial presentation encompasses the portrayal of the imperial family on media produced by the regime in Constantinople. It will then compare this presentation to their depiction in the contemporary Eastern histories of Socrates, Sozomen, Theodoret, and Olympiodorus. Imperial ceremonial relates to events occurring in public spaces in the city of Constantinople that directly involved the emperor – either through his own instigation or through his expected presence. These ceremonies include regular secular events, such as the emperor's presence at the Hippodrome or the annual inspection of public granaries; grandiose events including triumphal celebrations; and ecclesiastical events, such as the translation of holy relics into the city. Finally, the literary reception of Theodosius II and his family assesses the long-term presentation of this reign in accounts that range from the sixth to ninth centuries.

As this thesis deals primarily with the imperial family's portrayal within Constantinople, the majority of material evidence utilised will be considered products of the 'official' administrative body. Therefore, this thesis adopts the definition provided by Noreña, among

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<sup>111</sup> Burman 1994: 65; Cameron 2016: 68-70; Holum 1982: 114; Hunt 1983: 234.

<sup>112</sup> Burgess 1993/1994: 52; James 2001: 18; Watts 2013: 279.

<sup>113</sup> For an analysis of the post-Chalcedon depiction of Theodosius II and his family see Burgess 1993/1994; James 2001: 12-18; Watts 2013.

others, when analysing ‘official’ material. He stated that officials connected to the emperor and his inner circle (namely members of his Consistory) produced the official image of the regime.<sup>114</sup> Therefore, coins minted at Constantinople, or with the travelling retinue of Valentinian III, will be considered official images of the central regime. The epigraphic and statuary evidence erected in and around Constantinople and the legislative documents will also be interpreted as official products of the regime. Moreover, though addressed sparingly, this thesis also analyses media produced by actors outside this official sphere. Therefore, provincial coinage or statues of the imperial family erected outside Constantinople will be termed as local images of the regime. Though this material was created within the established framework produced on centrally controlled media, their portrayal of the imperial family was shaped on numerous factors: their local culture, a provincial governor’s desire to maintain or elevate either his position or the position of the region, and differing interpretations of imperial presentation.<sup>115</sup> To explore the contemporary and long-term literary reception of Theodosius II’s public image, this thesis is reliant on the analysis of ancient literature, such as ecclesiastical and narrative histories, and chronicles. By comparing the presentation of the imperial family on centrally controlled media to their portrayal in literary material, this thesis will highlight the uniformity in their public presentation and their reported behaviour in the city.

In addition to ancient material, this thesis will utilise numerous modern methodological approaches in the study of Theodosius II’s reign. Firstly, this thesis applies the approaches of Jill Harries and Dilyana Angelova when dealing with the Theodosian women. As such, both Pulcheria and Eudocia will be considered through their relationship to Theodosius II, as sister and wife respectively, rather than dominant political figures in their own right.<sup>116</sup> Moreover, the role of all the Theodosian women will be analysed through their public contribution to the image of the Christian *exemplum*.<sup>117</sup> When analysing the role of imperial ceremonial in promoting Theodosius II’s public image, this thesis adopts the approaches found in Christopher Kelly and Peter Van Nuffelen. Both authors have examined the high stakes involved in imperial ceremonial and have concluded that emperors had to be consummate actors who continually performed to their audience, and have the ability to react appropriately to

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<sup>114</sup> Noreña 2011a: 16. Also, see Davenport 2016: 383; Hekster 2015: 30-34; Rowan 2011: 243.

<sup>115</sup> Davenport 2014: 46 (interpretation); Noreña 2011a: 19 (elevation); Rowan 2011: 143 (local culture). For more, see Hekster 2015: 319-320.

<sup>116</sup> Harries 2013: 72.

<sup>117</sup> Angelova 2015: 148-157.

unscripted events.<sup>118</sup> Through this approach, both Kelly and Van Nuffelen have shown moments when Theodosius II manipulated his public presentation.<sup>119</sup> Finally, when considering the East's involvement in Western affairs, this thesis uses the approach of Andrew Gillett and Peter Van Nuffelen in their examination of Olympiodorus of Thebes' history. Rather than considering it a history of the West, both authors have shown how the work contributed to the contemporary imperial perception of Eastern triumphalism.<sup>120</sup> This concept will be applied to all other Eastern sources on Theodosius II's intervention in the West. Overall, this thesis does not pursue the task of rehabilitation. Rather, it attempts to understand how Theodosius II's public image contributed to the stability and longevity of his reign.

#### 4.1 Overview of Thesis

This thesis examines the contemporary image of Theodosius II within the city of Constantinople throughout his forty-two-year sole reign. It focuses on his presentation in centrally controlled public media, such as coins and inscriptions, and his depiction in literary material. It re-assesses the traditional interpretation of the longest reigning Roman Emperor and argues that the regime of Theodosius II offered a coherent public presentation. Divided into three case studies, this thesis will analyse key components of the emperor's reign to explore how the Eastern Theodosian regime first adapted and later developed traditional imperial presentation to dispel some anxieties associated with child-emperor rule. These case studies include: (i) the emperor and the Theodosian women; (ii) imperial ceremonial and the city of Constantinople; and (iii) the portrayal of Theodosius II's intervention in the West by Eastern sources. In covering the entirety of the emperor's reign, this thesis will outline the early establishment of the Eastern Theodosian image and trace its progressive transformation that coincided with the growth of the emperor and his family.

Chapter One, *The Eastern Theodosians*, examines the public image of the Eastern Theodosian regime from its earliest identifiable inception in 414 until the final decade of Theodosius II's reign. It will first analyse how the communal vow of perpetual virginity undertaken in 414 by Theodosius II's three sisters, fourteen-year-old Pulcheria, thirteen-year-old Arcadia, and ten-year-old Marina, provided the foundation for the regime's long-term public image. Within this analysis, the concept of familial unity between all four members of the Eastern Theodosian

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<sup>118</sup> Kelly 2013b: 228-230; Van Nuffelen 2012: 192-193.

<sup>119</sup> Kelly 2013b: 242-243; Van Nuffelen 2012: 191, 192-193.

<sup>120</sup> Gillett 1993: 20-25; Van Nuffelen 2013: 130, 133.

family will be highlighted and the continual presence of Arcadia and Marina in this concept will be shown. Secondly, it will explore how Pulcheria's elevation to Augusta, a title traditionally bestowed on adult imperial women, only months after her vow, enabled this young brother-sister pair to be presented in a manner similar to their parents and grandparents before them. It will be shown that this image of continuity aimed to limit concerns associated with Theodosius II's minority. Therefore, it will be argued that Pulcheria's elevation was not undertaken because she dominated Theodosius II and ruled in his stead, but rather so she could be publicly presented as the female half of the 'imperial couple', a concept traditionally utilised by the emperor and an adult empress. After establishing the nuanced components in the public image of the Eastern Theodosian regime, this chapter then examines how it developed alongside the growth of the emperor and his family. By analysing key events, Theodosius II's marriage to Eudocia in 421 and her elevation to Augusta in 423, Pulcheria's retirement to the Hebdomon palace in 439, and Eudocia's move to Jerusalem in 441, this section will demonstrate the long-term success of this image in promoting Theodosius II's position and its durability over four decades.

Chapter Two, *Theodosius II and Constantinople*, investigates how Theodosius II's involvement in the ceremonial life of Constantinople contributed to the long-term stability of his reign. It examines four examples of Theodosius II's positive interaction with the people of Constantinople: (i) the impromptu hymn-singing in the Hippodrome to deter an impending storm in the early 420s; (ii) the triumphal celebrations in the Hippodrome after the defeat of the usurper John in 425; (iii) the reinterment of the rehabilitated patriarch of Constantinople, John Chrysostom in 438; and (iv) the 'piety walk' after the destructive earthquake in 441. In contrast to these examples, a fifth less positive interaction with the citizenry will be presented to highlight that not all of Theodosius II's meetings with the public were successful. This chapter will highlight how the emperor adapted the traditional ceremonial framework to align with his nuanced image. Furthermore, it will show that rather than recycling the traditional elements involved in these events, the emperor reinvented them. Therefore, as this chapter deals specifically with events that occurred during Theodosius II's adult years, it will be argued that these examples suggest the emperor had a more active role in shaping his public image than many scholars have previously assumed.

Finally, Chapter Three, *Theodosius II and the West*, analyses the portrayal of Theodosius II in the Eastern sources at key moments when he intervened in the West. Three examples are

investigated to explore this portrayal: (i) the events leading up to and immediately following the installation of Valentinian III onto the Western throne in 425; (ii) the marriage of Licinia Eudoxia to Valentinian III in 437; and (iii) the promulgation of the Theodosian Code soon after this union. This chapter will demonstrate that through his depiction as the senior figure over Valentinian III on contemporary coinage, imperial edicts and literature, the adult Theodosius II was portrayed as the guardian of the young emperor and the protector of the unified Roman Empire. Moreover, it will show that numerous components of the Western imperial image, such as the elevation of the emperor's young sister, Honoria, to Augusta, imitated their Eastern counterpart, and further highlighted the success of Theodosius II's image in promoting minority rule. Finally, the final two examples will once again highlight how the public image of the Eastern Theodosian regime adapted to coincide with the growth of Valentinian III. In marrying the only surviving child of Theodosius II and Eudocia to the Western emperor, the Eastern regime developed the image of the Eastern emperor from the guardian to father of the adult Valentinian III. Finally, through the analysis of the Edict of 429, which outlined the task of the law's codification, and a speech made by a Western official to a Western audience at Rome in 438, this final example will highlight how the Theodosian Code solidified the image of the East's dominance and Theodosius II's role as the senior emperor over both empires.

The examination of these three case studies will highlight the uniformity of the imperial public image across the entirety of Theodosius II's reign. The first case study will show the earliest identifiable evidence to suggest the adaptation of the imperial image and will highlight the overt importance of the ruling family's ostentatious acts of piety and familial unity. This case study will also show how the regime altered a traditional and expected image, an imperial couple, to minimise some anxieties associated with minority rule. Finally, it will outline the fluidity of this image and its ability to develop alongside the growth of the emperor and his family. The second case study will examine four positive and one negative interaction between Theodosius II and the populace of Constantinople during ceremonial events and will highlight both the traditional and reinvented components implemented during these occasions. It will show that these ceremonies were modified in order to highlight important aspects of the emperor's public image – namely his piety and the portrayal of unity. As such, the second case study provides the strongest evidence to suggest Theodosius II actively participated in the promulgation of his image throughout Constantinople.

The final case study investigates Theodosius II's portrayal in Eastern sources during key moments of Western interaction. It will first highlight the foundation of the image of Theodosius II as the guardian of Valentinian III and protector of the West, and then trace its progressive modification through time. Therefore, this case study will show how the emperor's piety was extended to protect the Western Empire and how the image of unity between the two courts was celebrated at Constantinople through the marriage of the Western emperor to Theodosius II's daughter and the promulgation of the Theodosian Code. Overall, this thesis will show how the public nature of Theodosius II's reign contributed to the establishment of a new form of active leadership in the East – one based primarily within Constantinople and amongst its citizenry. Moreover, it will demonstrate how the public image of the Eastern Theodosian family contributed to his stability and longevity over a forty-two-year period.

## The Eastern Theodosians

### 1.1 Introduction

By the time of his full accession to Augustus in 408, Theodosius II was the fifth successive child-emperor to rule the Roman Empire.<sup>121</sup> Through these repeated accessions, the public image of these child-emperors went through a progressive transformation to adapt to the shortcomings associated with child-rule.<sup>122</sup> As such, the piety of these young emperors was highlighted in their public presentation and continually emphasised throughout their reigns.<sup>123</sup> Though imperial piety had always been an important aspect in any emperor's public portrayal, with the advent of successive child-emperors it became, in many ways, the crux of their image. This was in no way different for the public presentation of Theodosius II. However, the level to which his piety was emphasised and the involvement of his entire family in its ongoing presentation suggests this traditional imperial image was modified to better suit the early reign of this emperor. In 414, six years into Theodosius II's sole rule, two events occurred that indicate the initial adaptation of the Eastern Theodosian image. At the beginning of this year, the emperor's three sisters, fourteen-year-old Pulcheria, thirteen-year-old Arcadia, and ten-year-old Marina, publicly devoted themselves to God through a communal vow of perpetual virginity. Then, only months later, the emperor's eldest sister, Pulcheria, was elevated to Augusta – a title traditionally bestowed upon adult imperial women.

Divided into four sections, this chapter analyses the public image of the Eastern Theodosian family throughout Theodosius II's reign. Section one, *The Core Family: Pulcheria, Arcadia, Theodosius II and Marina*, examines the role of all four young members of the Eastern Theodosian house in the public image of the regime. It first establishes the initial presentation of Theodosius II during his co-rule with his father Arcadius (402-408) and the first six years of his sole reign (408-414). This section then analyses the vow of virginity in 414 as it is presented in Sozomen's history. It will highlight the publicity of piety and unity in this act and suggest that these were key themes in new Eastern Theodosian image. This section compares the contemporary literary portrayal of familial unity with an important, though fragmentary, inscription placed at the Hebdomon, seven miles from central Constantinople. Through this

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<sup>121</sup> Gratian (367-383); Valentinian II (375-392); Arcadius (395-408); Honorius (395-423). Not including the reigns of Valentinian I (364-375), Valens (364-378) and Theodosius I (379-395) who ruled alongside child-emperors.

<sup>122</sup> As firstly highlighted by McEvoy 2010: esp. 159-162; McEvoy 2013: 109-117, these shortcomings included mainly the martial and judicial components of rulership.

<sup>123</sup> McEvoy 2010: 165; McEvoy 2013: 117-127.

comparison, this section will highlight the continuity between the literary depiction of the imperial family and material evidence produced by the central regime.

Section two, *An Imperial Couple*, re-assesses the long-held modern interpretation of Pulcheria's dominant role over Theodosius II. It will compare the empress' portrayal on numismatic evidence and descriptions in the ancient literature with her adult, Christian predecessors. In doing so, this section will highlight continuity in her portrayal with her earlier counterparts and suggest that her elevation to Augusta in 414 enabled her and Theodosius II to be presented as an imperial couple. This section will then show how this image of continuity aimed to limit concerns associated with minority rule. Section three, *A Growing Family*, assesses the development of this image alongside Theodosius II's transition to adulthood and the expansion of his family. This section deals primarily with the incorporation of Eudocia into the public image of the regime after her marriage to Theodosius II in 421 and elevation to Augusta in 423. It will examine the surviving numismatic material minted on behalf of this empress to determine how the image of an imperial couple composed of Theodosius II and Pulcheria was modified to incorporate a new Augusta. It will suggest that the Theodosian regime presented an image of a closely unified imperial unit, with Pulcheria now fulfilling a more motherly role over Theodosius II and Eudocia.

Finally, section four, *Enduring through Change*, considers two events that occurred in the final decade of Theodosius II's reign, which saw the retirements of Pulcheria and Eudocia from court life in Constantinople. Through the analysis of imperial coinage from the 440s, this section will show that though these two women were spatially separated from the emperor, as Pulcheria moved to the Hebdomon and Eudocia to Jerusalem, the image of imperial unity was consistently portrayed by the central regime. In examining these two events, this section will address how the regime successfully manipulated these moments to reinforce key components of the public image. As such, this section will highlight the durability of this image and its ability to adapt, withstand, and even benefit from potentially damaging situations. Overall, this chapter will show how the Eastern Theodosian regime first adapted the imperial image to suit the situation of a young family reigning in the East without any adult familial support. It will then go on to show that this image was not static, but continually developed throughout Theodosius II's reign.



## 2.1 The Core Family: Pulcheria, Arcadia, Theodosius II and Marina

Before addressing the modifications made to the Eastern Theodosian image in 414, it is first necessary to establish the initial portrayal of Theodosius II during his co-rule with father, Arcadius, and for the first six years after his full accession. Born in April 401, Theodosius II was proclaimed Augustus just nine months later in January 402.<sup>124</sup> Through his elevation, Theodosius II joined an imperial college that included his mother and father in Constantinople, and his uncle, Honorius, in the West. The examination of imperial coinage minted at Constantinople after his elevation indicates that an image of uniformity between the three ruling Augusti was promoted by the central regime. Figure one shows an early portrayal of the infant Theodosius II, with the coin struck soon after his accession in 402. The obverse of this coin portrays an adult emperor dressed in military garb, with the legend D N THEODO-SIVS P F AVG, indicating that the ruler shown is the young Theodosius II. The adult portrayal of the baby Theodosius II was consistent for this period and constantly utilised during the reigns of earlier child-emperors.<sup>125</sup> The reverse depicts an enthroned Constantinopolis, helmeted, holding a sceptre in her right hand and Victory on a globe in her left, her right foot is placed on a prow, and the legend reads, CONCORDIA AVGGG. The obverse legend suggests that through the minting of this coin, the regime in Constantinople wanted to promote the image of harmony (CONCORDIA) between the three ruling Augusti (AVGGG).



Figure One: *Solidus* of Theodosius II.



Figure Two: *Solidus* of Arcadius.

Figure Three: *Solidus* of Honorius.

<sup>124</sup> Birth: Soc. 6.6.40; Soz. 8.4.21; Marcel. *com.* s.a. 401; *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 401. Elevation to Augustus: Soz. 8.4.21; Marcel. *com.* 402.2; *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 402.

<sup>125</sup> For example RIC VII Treveri 107, 125 (for young Constantine II); RIC IX Antioch 19-21C (for young Gratian); RIC IX Antioch 39A-40C (for young Valentinian II).

Moreover, it was not just the reverse legend on this coin that promoted the image of unity between Arcadius, Honorius, and Theodosius II. Figure two and figure three above show two coin types minted in Constantinople depicting both Arcadius and Honorius respectively. By comparing all three types, it becomes clear that the three emperors are almost mirror images of each other, with only the obverse legend differentiating the rulers. Therefore, when minted separately, there was no clear distinction between the three emperors, nor any indicating markers suggesting the youth of Theodosius II. When the three Augusti were portrayed together, however, Theodosius II's junior status was shown. Three coins minted at Constantinople between 406 and 408 (one example in figure four) depicts Arcadius and Honorius as equal height, with a smaller Theodosius II in the middle. Though Theodosius II's minority was shown, his presentation here once again continued well-established norms.<sup>126</sup>



Figure Four: Bronze AE3 of Arcadius.

Within the Eastern imperial family specifically, the imperial image continued on the traditional precedent. In early January 400, Arcadius' wife, Eudoxia, was elevated to Augusta.<sup>127</sup> For the next four years until her death in 404, she and Arcadius were portrayed as an adult imperial couple, with her image depicted on coins and disseminated through the Empire.<sup>128</sup> Therefore, for Theodosius II's six-year co-rule with Arcadius, the imperial image of the Theodosian family followed traditional lines – the young emperor was portrayed as an adult on individual coinage and his adult parents were presented as an imperial couple. Moreover, it is important to note that the three sisters did not play a role in the imperial family's numismatic image and appeared in the historical record only in relation to their births.<sup>129</sup> However, once again their lack of presence on official media and in the literature was not irregular, but consistent with other female imperial children.

<sup>126</sup> Croke 2010: 262; Geyssen 1998; González 2013: 93.

<sup>127</sup> *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 400 (January 9).

<sup>128</sup> Death: Marcel. *com.* s.a. 404.2; *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 404 (October 6). Appearance on coins: RIC X Arcadius 10.

<sup>129</sup> Flaccilla: Marcel. *com.* s.a. 397; *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 397; Pulcheria: Marcel. *com.* s.a. 399.1, *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 399; Arcadia: *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 400; Marina: Marcel. *com.* s.a. 403.1; *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 403. It is not known when Flaccilla died. However, it is assumed she passed before the death of Arcadius, as she is not mentioned among his surviving children in Soz. 9.1.1; Philostor. *HE* 9.6.

The death of Arcadius in 408, four years after his wife, orphaned the then eleven-year-old Pulcheria, nine-year-old Arcadia, eight-year-old Theodosius II and five-year-old Marina.<sup>130</sup> Though Honorius expressed a desire to aid his young nephew at this time of transition, his powerful general, Stilicho, thwarted his attempts.<sup>131</sup> This then left the Eastern Theodosian regime in the unprecedented situation of having a child-emperor rule without any adult familial support.<sup>132</sup> Despite this remarkable situation there was only one modification made by the central regime: the eight-year-old Theodosius II was depicted as equal on coinage alongside his adult Western colleague.<sup>133</sup> However, outside of this slight change, it appears that an image of continuity was established. Moreover, the literary evidence suggests that the three sisters did not play a prominent public role in the regime during this time, nor was their presence alongside the young emperor mentioned. The public image of Theodosius II's first six years as sole emperor was not the only arena in which a policy of continuation was adopted. It has been recently remarked that the successful full accession and early stability of Theodosius II's reign owed much to the stable government left by Arcadius.<sup>134</sup> Though numerous other factors contributed to this initial prosperity, the continuation in office of leading officials, such as the Praetorian Prefect Anthemius and the imperial *cubicularius* and tutor Antiochus, presumably quelled some anxieties associated with Theodosius II's minority.<sup>135</sup>

By 414, however, there was a notable shift in both of these arenas. In January of this year, the Theodosian sisters undertook their vow of virginity and in April Anthemius was last attested as Praetorian Prefect of the East.<sup>136</sup> Pulcheria was elevated to the rank of Augusta in July and by December a second administrator from Arcadius' reign, Aurelian, was recalled from retirement and made, for the second time, Praetorian Prefect.<sup>137</sup> Moreover, sometime during this year Antiochus temporarily retired from imperial service.<sup>138</sup> That the reshuffle in the

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<sup>130</sup> Arcadius' death: Soc. 6.23.7; Marcel. *com.* s.a. 408.3.

<sup>131</sup> Soz. 9.4.5-6; Olymp. Frag. 2.5.2-5 (in Blockley 1983). Cf. Zos. 5.36.3. McEvoy 2013: 181. Discussed further in Chapter Three.

<sup>132</sup> See McEvoy 2019: 118. Examples of child emperors who had some familial support, mainly their mothers, are Nero, Elagabalus, Caracalla, Alexander Severus, Valentinian II and Valentinian III. Honorius was supported by Stilicho who was a member of the imperial family through his marriage to Theodosius I's niece, Serena.

<sup>133</sup> See RIC Theodosius II (East) 409-410 and Chapter Three for further discussion.

<sup>134</sup> See McEvoy forthcoming 2019a, who highlighted Arcadius' contribution to Theodosius II's early stability.

<sup>135</sup> PLRE II Anthemius 1; PLRE II Antiochus 5.

<sup>136</sup> Vow: Soz. 9.1.3-5, Theoph. AM 5901; Anthemius: CTh 9.40.22 (April 18).

<sup>137</sup> Pulcheria: Marcel. *com.* s.a. 414.1, *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 414 (July 4); Aurelian: *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 414; CTh 9.25.2 (March 415); PLRE I Aurelianus 3.

<sup>138</sup> Theoph. AM 5905. It is perhaps possible that Antiochus retired from imperial service soon after Anthemius' own retirement (probably on account of old age, illness or death). However, Holum 1982: 96-97, followed by

administration closely coincided with significant public events involving the imperial family suggests that the Eastern Theodosian regime saw it necessary to adapt the traditional Theodosian image in order to promote the imperial family.<sup>139</sup> Though six years had passed since Theodosius II's full accession in 408, the emperor and his family was still considerably young in 414, which necessitated a modified image to better suit their contemporary situation. The first act publicly undertaken by the young imperial family suggests that this new image was founded on the unusual presentation of a young and chaste imperial family, unified through acts of piety. Therefore, in the following section, I will analyse contemporary literary and material evidence to examine the early establishment of the Eastern Theodosian image. As such, this section will show how all four members of the family were presented to show an image of familial unity. Though this section deals primarily with the early formation of this image, the continuous inclusion of the four core members of the Eastern Theodosian house in subsequent decades will also be addressed.

### *The Establishment of Public Unity*

Early in 414, the emperor's three sisters undertook a vow that would come to define the reign of Theodosius II. Sozomen, providing the earliest and most detailed account, states:

She [Pulcheria] first devoted her virginity to God, and instructed her sisters in the same course of life. To avoid all cause of jealousy and intrigue, she permitted no man to enter her palace. In confirmation of her resolution, she took God, the priests, and all the subjects of the Roman Empire as witnesses to her self-dedication. In token of her virginity and the headship of her brother, she consecrated in the Church of Constantinople, a holy table, a remarkable fabric and very beautiful to see; it was made of gold and precious stones; and she inscribed these things on the front of the table, so that it might be patent to all.<sup>140</sup>

This excerpt from the opening passage of the last book in Sozomen's history, dedicated to examining Theodosius II's sole reign, clearly suggests the adaptation of the traditional Eastern Theodosian public image.<sup>141</sup> However, before examining this event more closely, it is first

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Chew 2006: 214-215, have argued that both men were forced out of office through the machinations of Pulcheria. Cf. Cameron 2016: 66; Greatrex et al. 1996: 191-192; Harries 2013: 73.

<sup>139</sup> By the end of 414 Pulcheria was fifteen, Arcadia was fourteen, Theodosius II was thirteen and Marina was eleven.

<sup>140</sup> Soz. 9.1.3-5. καὶ πρῶτα μὲν τὴν αὐτῆς παρθενίαν τῷ θεῷ ἀνέθηκε καὶ τὰς ἀδελφὰς ἐπὶ τὸν αὐτὸν ἐπαιδαγωγῆσε βίον, ὅπως μὴ ἄλλον ἄνδρα ἐπεισαγάγῃ τοῖς βασιλείοις καὶ ζήλου καὶ ἐπιβουλῆς πάσαν ἀνέλῃ ἀφορμὴν. ἐπιβεβαιούσα δὲ τὰ δόξαντα καὶ θεὸν αὐτὸν καὶ ἱερέας καὶ πάντα ἀρχόμενον μάρτυρας ποιουμένη τῶν αὐτῇ βεβουλευμένων, ἐκ χρυσοῦ καὶ λίθων τιμίων θαυμάσιόν τι χρῆμα θεαμάτων κάλλιστον ὑπὲρ τῆς ἰδίας παρθενίας καὶ τῆς τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ ἡγεμονίας ἱερὰν ἀνέθετο τράπεζαν ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ Κωνσταντινουπόλεως· καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ μετώπου τῆς τραπέζης, ὡς ἂν πᾶσιν ἐκδηλὰ ᾦ, τάδε ἐπέγραψεν.

<sup>141</sup> McEvoy 2019: 118-120; Van Nuffelen 2013: 136.

important to comment briefly on Pulcheria's portrayal. I would suggest that Sozomen portrayed Pulcheria as a motherly figure over Arcadia and Marina to reflect her future position as Theodosius II's female partner figure. Though important in examining the new Theodosian image, for this section I will consider the collective role of all four member of the imperial family before moving onto the analysis of an imperial couple.

The act of a communal vow of virginity undertaken by the female members of the ruling house was an unprecedented event. Though numerous ancient and modern works have attempted to provide a justification for this act, it is also important to reiterate its timing and the wider events occurring within the administration.<sup>142</sup> Only months after this oath, Anthemius, who was by 414 an elderly man, disappeared from the historical record. Shortly thereafter, perhaps, the imperial *cubicularius* and Theodosius II's tutor, Antiochus, retired from his position. Therefore, the change of key members in the imperial administration, who had contributed to the ongoing stability of the regime since the death of Arcadius, presented an opportunity for the introduction of a new presentation of the emperor and his sisters. Considering this wider context, the vow can be seen as a part of this adjustment. Moreover, it also provided a platform that enabled the regime to promote the now slightly older imperial family to the people of Constantinople and to highlight the importance of their collective piety in this new image.

That a greater public presence of the Theodosian family was necessary at this time is perhaps evident through the recall of retired Arcadian official, Aurelian.<sup>143</sup> A surviving entry in the Greek Anthology might indicate why Aurelian was recalled fourteen years after his initial retirement. Dated to 416, the anonymous account, which described the inscription on the base of a lost golden statue of the official, lauds the Praetorian Prefect calling him the protector of the senate and a man who 'willingly put trouble to an end.'<sup>144</sup> Though this entry might relate to the administrator's role during the Gaïnas revolt in the 400s, his image was clearly associated with stability and control.<sup>145</sup> That his statue was erected in Constantinople suggests that the regime wanted to reinforce this perception even two years after his initial reinstallation.

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<sup>142</sup> Soz. 9.1.3. Holum 1982: 93-96 closely followed Sozomen's justification stating that the young princess actively took steps to ensure she and her sisters would not be married off. Van Nuffelen 2013: 136-141 suggested that the vow was undertaken as a precautionary measure so to avoid the rise of dominant military men at court. See also McEvoy 2019: 119-120.

<sup>143</sup> Aurelian was Praetorian Prefect in 399 and consul for 400. For his career, see Cameron et al. 1993: 199-233; Liebeschuetz 1990: 104-106.

<sup>144</sup> *Anth. Gr.* 16.73. Οὗτος ὁ κοσμήσας Ὑπάτων θρόνον, ὃν τρισέπαρχον; καὶ πατέρα βασιλῆες ἐὼν καλέσαντο μέγιστοι, χρύσεος ἔστηκεν Αὐρηλιανός· τὸ δὲ ἔργον τῆς βουλῆς, ἣς αὐτὸς ἐκὼν κατέπαυσεν ἀνίας.

<sup>145</sup> Gaïnas revolt: Cameron et al. 1993: 161-175, 201-211; Liebeschuetz 1990: 104-125.

Therefore, his recall at the end of 414 indicates that the change in the key office-holders, who had successfully administered the Empire for many years, caused some anxiety within the imperial family and surrounding court.

Sozomen's account further supports the conclusion that publicity was an important factor in the sisters' vow of virginity. The author stated that the vow was not undertaken behind the walls of the Great Palace, but had 'God, the priests and all the subjects of the Roman Empire' as witnesses.<sup>146</sup> Therefore, the purpose of this public declaration was two-fold. Firstly, it allowed the image of an ostentatiously pious young imperial family be promoted to the populace of the city, and secondly, it connected this family to the citizenry of the capital. This connection, mainly between the emperor and the people, was an important factor in the new form of active leadership (as we will discuss further in Chapter 2). Therefore, the fact that the earliest identifiable event was celebrated alongside Constantinopolitans suggests that it provided the foundation for the new Eastern Theodosian image.

The final line in the passage above further reinforces this hypothesis: in ensuring that this event would be known and remembered by all, Pulcheria donated to the Church of Constantinople an ornate table and inscribed on its front the vow she and her sisters undertook.<sup>147</sup> Though special church sermons probably would have accompanied the initial vow, the donation of the table into the Church would have perhaps included an imperial procession throughout the city – further intertwining the imperial family and the city populace.<sup>148</sup> Finally, the donation of the table reinforces the importance of this vow to the new Eastern Theodosian image. Firstly, it ensured that the act would be remembered for years to come, and secondly it continually promoted to those congregating in the Church that the imperial image of this Eastern Theodosian Family was founded on the piety and unity between its four core members.

### *The Ongoing Theodosian Collective*

The communal vow of virginity in 414 is the earliest identifiable event to suggest that the new imperial image, which was adapted to suit the needs of Theodosius II and his family, was

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<sup>146</sup> Soz. 9.1.4. ἐπιβεβαιούσα δὲ τὰ δόξαντα καὶ θεὸν αὐτὸν καὶ ἱερέας καὶ πάντα ἀρχόμενον μάρτυρας ποιουμένη τῶν αὐτῇ βεβουλευμένων...

<sup>147</sup> Soz. 9.1.5.

<sup>148</sup> For an example of such public celebrations accompanying an imperial dedication, see Soc. 6.18.1 who stated that after a statue of Eudoxia was erected in Constantinople public games, as was the custom, were performed. See also Soz. 8.20.1.

founded on the presentation of familial unity and ostentatious piety. However, it was by no means the only instance within the source material where these themes emerged in relation to the sisters. In a passage, which described the collective virtues of Pulcheria, Arcadia, and Marina, Sozomen states:

They all pursue the same mode of life; they are sedulous about the priests and the houses of prayer, and are munificent to needy strangers and the poor. These sisters generally take their meals and walks together, and pass their days and their nights in company, singing the praises of God. As is the custom with exemplary women, they employ themselves in weaving and in similar occupations. Although princesses, born and educated in palaces, they avoid levity and idleness, which they think unworthy of any who profess virginity, so they put such indolence far from their own life.<sup>149</sup>

As this is a laudatory passage, Sozomen did not provide any specific date for his description of the sisters' actions. Rather, he implied that they took place when they dwelled in the palace together. Therefore, the passage suggests that this description of an imperial family united through piety was still a publicly accepted portrayal in the 440s. Devoid of its wider context, Sozomen's description of the actions of these women was not distinctive. As Harries has recently shown, his presentation of Pulcheria, Arcadia and Marina followed traditional female expectations: they passed their days and nights together and often remained indoors, engaging in domestic tasks.<sup>150</sup> Moreover, they also epitomised traditional Christian virtues: they were dedicated to churchmen, the church, the poor, and needy.<sup>151</sup> However, though following a traditional precedent, the final line in the passage, directly following his discussion of the emperor's sisters, suggests how their pious activities contributed to this adapted imperial image:

For this reason the mercy of God is manifested and is conquering in behalf of their house; for He increases the emperor in years and government; every conspiracy and war concocted against him had been overthrown of itself.<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> Soz. 9.3.1-3. ἐπεὶ καὶ αὗται τὸν ἴσον πολιτεύονται τρόπον, περὶ τοὺς ἱερέας καὶ τοὺς εὐκτηρίους οἴκους σπουδάζουσιν καὶ περὶ τοὺς δεομένους ξένους καὶ πτωχοὺς φιλοτιμούμεναι. τράπεζα δὲ καὶ πρόοδος ὡς ἐπίπαν ἢ αὐτὴ πάσαις, κοινῇ τε νύκτωρ καὶ μεθ' ἡμέραν τὸν θεὸν ὕμνουσι. καὶ οἷος ἀξιαγάστων γυναικῶν νόμος, ὑφασμάτων καὶ τῶν τοιούτων ἔργων ἐπεμελοῦντο· ῥαστώνην γὰρ καὶ ἀργίαν, καίπερ βασιλεύουσιν καὶ ἐν βασιλείῳις τεχθεῖσαι καὶ τραφεῖσαι, παρθενίας ἱερᾶς ἦν μετίασιν ἀναξίαν ἡγήσαντο καὶ τοῦ οἰκείου βίου ἀφώρισαν.

<sup>150</sup> Harries 2013: 69.

<sup>151</sup> This is reminiscent of Helena's actions during the reign of Constantine. Angelova 2015: 142; Brubaker 1997. See Drijvers 1992: 95-117 for the construction of the Helena legend in later fourth century. It is also praised more recently for Aelia Flaccilla – see McEvoy forthcoming 2019b.

<sup>152</sup> Soz. 9.3.3. διὰ ταῦτα δὲ προφανῶς ἴλεω ὄντος τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τοῦ αὐτῶν οἴκου ὑπερμαχοῦντος, τῷ μὲν κρατοῦντι τὰ τῆς ἡλικίας καὶ τῆς ἀρχῆς ἐπεδίδου, πᾶσα δὲ ἐπιβουλὴ καὶ πόλεμος κατ' αὐτοῦ συνιστάμενος αὐτομάτως διελύετο.

Through this addition, one can see a clear progression in the Eastern Theodosian image. Here Sozomen linked the actions of the emperor's three sisters, namely their pious acts, to the stability, longevity, and prosperity of the emperor's reign. Therefore, this account of Pulcheria, Arcadia and Marina's virtuous actions highlights the role of familial unity and piety in the new imperial image. Moreover, as Sozomen's account was written in the final years of Theodosius II's reign, this passage shows the long-term success of this image in promoting the emperor's rule. Through this analysis the ongoing presentation of familial piety, which was first established in 414, contributed to the emperor's long-term success.

Sozomen's description of the Eastern Theodosian image emphasised the importance of the imperial women in its display. This is in clear contrast to his predecessor, Socrates, who did not mention the sisters by name, nor described their vow in any detail and was more circumspect in his description of the imperial public image.<sup>153</sup> Despite this, the presentation of familial unity and the importance of their piety are still presented throughout his work. In a passage devoted to lauding the virtues of Theodosius II, Socrates states:

Theodosius rendered his palace little different than a monastery; for he, together with his sisters, rose early in the morning and recited responsive hymns in praise of the Deity.<sup>154</sup>

Socrates' description of the imperial household not only reinforces the idea of a unified imperial family, but also confirms how they were connected – through their piety and relationship to God. The author made no other mention of the sisters or their piety throughout his work, and focused solely on the virtues of the emperor. He proclaimed that Theodosius II learnt the Holy Scriptures by heart, was the most clement and humane of all emperors, mastered anger, grief and pleasure, and never inflicted capital punishment on wrongdoers.<sup>155</sup> Socrates further lauded Theodosius II's treatment of clergymen, stating that he had a 'reverential regard for all those who were consecrated to the service of God.'<sup>156</sup> The author even stated that when

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<sup>153</sup> The omission of the vow is quite peculiar, though perhaps implied in Socrates' later description of the palace as a monastery.

<sup>154</sup> Soc. 7.22.4. Οὐκ ἄλλοιότερα δὲ ἀσκητηρίου κατέστησε τὰ βασίλεια· αὐτὸς τοιγαροῦν <σὺν> ταῖς ἑαυτοῦ ἀδελφαῖς ὀρθρίζων ἀντιφώνους ὕμνους εἰς τὸ θεῖον ἔλεγεν.

<sup>155</sup> Soc. 7.22.5. Διὸ καὶ τὰ ἱερὰ γράμματα ἀπὸ στήθους ἀπήγγελλεν (scripture); 7.22.6. Τὸ ἀνεξίκακον καὶ φιλόανθρωπον πάντας ἀνθρώπους (clemency and humanity); 7.22.8. ...ὀργῆς τε κρατῶν καὶ λύπης καὶ (anger, grief and pleasure); 7.22.11. Οὕτω δὲ τοῦτο βεβαίως αὐτῷ κατάρθωτο, ὥστε, εἴ ποτέ τις ἄξια κεφαλικῆς ἐπλημμέλησε τιμωρίας, οὐδ' ἄχρι τῆς πόλεως τῶν πυλῶν τὴν ἐπὶ θανάτῳ ἀπήγετο, καὶ ἡ ἐκ τῆς φιλανθρωπίας εὐθὺς ἀνάκλησις εἶπετο (capital punishment).

<sup>156</sup> Soc. 7.22.13. Οὕτω δὲ ἦν εὐσεβής, ὥστε πάντας μὲν τοὺς τῷ Θεῷ ἱερωμένους τιμᾶν, ἐξαιρέτως δὲ οὓς ἐπυνθάνετο ἐπ' εὐλαβείᾳ πλέον ἐκπρέποντας.



a bishop died in Constantinople the emperor wished to honour the man and donned his ‘excessively filthy’ cloak in the hope of absorbing his piety.<sup>157</sup> This is not only an excessively pious act, but also a display of humility – an important Christian and imperial virtue.<sup>158</sup> Though Socrates and Sozomen’s accounts differed in their focus, they are similar in that their descriptions of the imperial family followed a traditional precedent. Harries has noted that Socrates’ Theodosius II fulfilled, and in some ways surpassed, the image of a *pious princeps* first established by Eusebius in his portrayal of Constantine.<sup>159</sup> However, where Socrates differed from his ecclesiastical predecessor is shown in a closing sentence within this chapter. He states:

If at any time war was raised, like David, Theodosius had recourse to God, knowing that he is the arbiter of battles, and by prayer brought them to a prosperous issue.<sup>160</sup>

This extract is the justification, according to Socrates, for Theodosius II’s long and stable reign – through the emperor’s piety, and that of his sisters, God protected the Empire from all military battles. Therefore, Socrates’ account has clear connections to Sozomen’s earlier passage, though in this case Theodosius II was the primary focus. Though the sisters’ role in Socrates’ account was secondary, they are still connected to the emperor through their piety, which protected the emperor and his reign. Therefore, in both contemporary ecclesiastical histories there are two key themes in the presentation of the imperial family. Firstly, the collective unity of the four members of the imperial house aided in the perception of a stable and prosperous rule. Secondly, Theodosius II was not portrayed as an isolated emperor, but rather the public pious image of his three sisters, established in 414, was utilised in the promotion of his reign.

### *Material Evidence*

It might be an expected literary trope that the ecclesiastical historians proclaimed divine favour, fostered by the collective piety of the imperial family, was the reason behind the prosperity of Theodosius II’s reign. However, further contemporary evidence survives to suggest this literary presentation was an accurate portrayal of the official image of the Eastern Theodosian family. A monumental base and its accompanying column shaft, which was excavated in situ

<sup>157</sup> Soc. 7.22.14. Λέγεται δὲ τὸ τοῦ Χεβράων ἐπισκόπου ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει τελευτήσαντος σάγιον ἐπιζητῆσαι καὶ σφόδρα ἐρρυπωμένον περιβαλέσθαι, πιστεύσας μεταλαβεῖν τι ἐκ τῆς τοῦ τελευτήσαντος ἀγιότητος.

<sup>158</sup> Theodosius II’s acts of humility will be discussed at length in Chapter Two.

<sup>159</sup> Harries 1992: 38 followed by Gardiner 2013: 249. Also, see McEvoy 2019: 121.

<sup>160</sup> Soc. 7.22.19. Εἰ δὲ ποτε πόλεμος ἐκινεῖτο, κατὰ τὸν Δαβὶδ τῷ Θεῷ προσέφευγεν, εἰδὼς αὐτὸν τῶν πολέμων εἶναι ταμίαν, καὶ εὐχῇ τούτους κατάρθου.

at the Hebdomon, seven miles from central Constantinople, provides this evidence.<sup>161</sup> On the base of this monumental column, there survives a heavily fragmented Latin inscription (figure five), which reads as follows:

*D N Theodo[-----]us  
Imperator et [-----]r  
[-----]nnis [-----]e  
[-----] votis sororum pacato  
[-----]ano celsus exultat.<sup>162</sup>*

*D(ominus) N(oster) Theodo[sius pius felix August]us  
Imperator et [fortissimus triumphato]r  
[gentium barbararum, pere]nnis [et ubiqu]e  
[victor, pro] votis sororum, pacato  
[orbe rom]ano celsus exultat.<sup>163</sup>*

Our lord, the gracious and fortunate Theodosius Augustus  
Commander-in-chief, very mighty, triumphant  
Over barbarian nations, always and everywhere  
Victory, through the vows of his sisters, having pacified  
The Roman world, rejoices on high.<sup>164</sup>



Figure Five: Victory Monument Inscription, forecourt of the Hagia Sophia.

The reconstruction of the fragmentary text was undertaken in 1954 by Robert Demangel.<sup>165</sup> Though accepted by scholars, it is important to note that the crucial words referring to the

<sup>161</sup> Makridou 1938: 170. That the column was connected to the base, see Stichel 1982: 98-99.

<sup>162</sup> LSA 31 = AE 1947, 185.

<sup>163</sup> AE 1947, 185; Croke 1977: 365; Holum 1982: 110.

<sup>164</sup> Demangel 1945: 33-40.

<sup>165</sup> Demangel 1945: 33-40

sisters of Theodosius II still survive on the stone.<sup>166</sup> These words, appearing on the fourth line on the inscription, are *votis*, *sorum* and *pacato*. The first two words, *votis* and *sorum*, should be taken together: the ablative plural *votis* and the genitive plural *sorum* translate to ‘through the vows of the sisters’. Through the survival of these two words, we can definitively state that this inscription was erected in honour of Theodosius II and not his grandfather, Theodosius I.<sup>167</sup> Moreover, as there is no other reported vow undertaken by the three sisters; it is highly probable that this unspecified vow is referring to the communal vow of virginity undertaken in 414.<sup>168</sup> If we consider the third important word, *pacato*, the justification for publicly celebrating this vow once again is highlighted. Through the perfect passive participle *pacato* one can see that the inscription claimed that something or someone ‘had been pacified’ through the vows of the sisters. Therefore, the survival of this word strongly suggests that the original monument was erected in commemoration of a military victory.

This conclusion is further supported by the original area in which this base was located. Its erection at the Hebdomon, the meeting place of the Eastern army, implies that the larger monument was intended to target the military. Though Theodosius II did not campaign with his armies, the surviving numismatic evidence shows that he was continually presented as a military leader.<sup>169</sup> Monuments and numismatic evidence from his similarly non-campaigning predecessors, Arcadius and Honorius, indicate that this presentation of Theodosius II followed an established norm.<sup>170</sup> Moreover, the survival of the column shaft that was once connected to the top of the base further highlights the traditional aspects associated with this monument. However, when you compare this base inscription with other military monuments from the period, the adapted imperial image of the Eastern Theodosian family is highlighted. For example, the numerous drawings of the lost Column of Arcadius, erected in his forum at Constantinople in 401/402 and completed in 421, promoted the harmony and concord between the two emperors, Arcadius and Honorius.<sup>171</sup> On the column itself, there are a numerous

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<sup>166</sup> Croke 1977: 365; Holum 1977: 172; Holum 1982: 110.

<sup>167</sup> Some monumental remains cannot be definitively attributed to either Theodosians, with the Golden Gate, LSA 2497, being the perfect example. Janin 1964: 269-270; Mango 1985: 124 originally argued the gate was contemporary with the Theodosian Walls completed during the reign of Theodosius II, but more recently, Bardill 1999 has argued the gate was erected during the reign of Theodosius I. This thesis will be following Bardill, and will not discuss the Golden Gate. See LSA 494 for another example.

<sup>168</sup> Holum 1982: 110-111.

<sup>169</sup> See RIC X Theodosius II (East) 201, 204, 218 for early examples of his militaristic presentation. McEvoy forthcoming 2020.

<sup>170</sup> For example RIC X Arcadius 7, 22 (Arcadius); RIC X Arcadius 8, 24 (Honorius).

<sup>171</sup> Marcel. *com.* s.a. 421.2; Cameron et al. 1993: 238; Liebeschuetz 1990: 120, 273; Matthews 2012b: 212.

depictions of pagan deities and Christian symbols, which followed the traditional precedent of Christian victory iconography from the period.<sup>172</sup> However, it is the carving of the Cross on the base of the column, the most visible area to onlookers, that highlights the importance of imperial piety in ensuring victory for this non-campaigning emperor.<sup>173</sup> The inscription on the base of Theodosius II's victory column shows that the regime continued the precedent set by Arcadius' monument, but the message was slightly modified to align with the new public image of Theodosius II's reign by incorporating the female members of the family.

An archaeological report on the initial excavation of this site states that the monument was once surrounded by a paved walkway.<sup>174</sup> This would suggest that the column, placed in an important ceremonial location near the city, was intended to be gazed upon by both the army and populace of Constantinople. Though originally inscribed in Latin in the Greek speaking East, it is highly plausible its intended audience understood the inscription's message.<sup>175</sup> As Demangel's reconstruction of the text was based primarily on imperial virtues minted on contemporary coinage, further suggests that residents the Greek speaking East, or at least those in Constantinople, had some familiarity with imperial titles, virtues, epithets, and achievements continually promoted by the central administration and connected to the emperor.<sup>176</sup>

Modern scholars have suggested that this column was erected after the East celebrated their military victory over the Persians in 422.<sup>177</sup> That this was the first successful military campaign waged by Eastern regime under Theodosius II further shows the importance of familial piety in the new public image of this reign.<sup>178</sup> It is the earliest identifiable example in which the piety of the entire imperial family was publicly connected to military victories on media produced by the central state. As such, through the survival of this inscription we can assert that the portrayal of the imperial family in the ecclesiastical histories, and their justification for the prosperity of Theodosius II's reign, was not of their own design. Rather, it was an accurate

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<sup>172</sup> Liebeschuetz 1990: 277; MacCormack 1981: 57-61; Matthews 2012b: 219-221.

<sup>173</sup> Grigg 1977: 469; Liebeschuetz 1990: 121; Matthews 2012b. Cf. the images of Theodosius I's victory column, Geyssen 1998.

<sup>174</sup> Makridou 1938: 173.

<sup>175</sup> Noreña 2011a: 218-219, 240; Noreña 2011b: 263-264; Wallace-Hadrill 1981: 23-24.

<sup>176</sup> Demangel 1945: 33-40 (reconstruction), followed by Davenport 2014: 46; Holum 1982: 110.

<sup>177</sup> Croke 1977: 365-366; Holum 1977: 172; Holum et al. 1979: 129; Holum 1982: 110-111. Croke also argued it celebrated a victory over the Huns.

<sup>178</sup> However, not the first-time victory celebrations were held in the city, these events are associated with Western battles only. See McCormick 1986: 58-59.

interpretation of the public image of the imperial family – one that emerged in 414 and was promoted continuously throughout the reign.

### *The Public Image of the Sisters*

The involvement of the sisters in acts of piety was not the only way in which their presence was disseminated to the residents of Constantinople. Though the ecclesiastical historians inform us that these women spent their days and nights together in pious affairs and good works, the *Notitia Urbis Constantinopolitanae*, a semi-official catalogue of major monuments within Constantinople, suggests that different residences of these women were dispersed throughout the city.<sup>179</sup> Arranged into fourteen regions (figure six), this *Notitia*, compiled sometime between 423 and 427, lists numerous buildings, including palaces, houses and baths, associated with the Theodosian family.<sup>180</sup> It related that outside of the Great Palace, Pulcheria had two separate houses, in region three and in region eleven, Arcadia had homes in region nine and ten and Marina had one house in region one.<sup>181</sup>

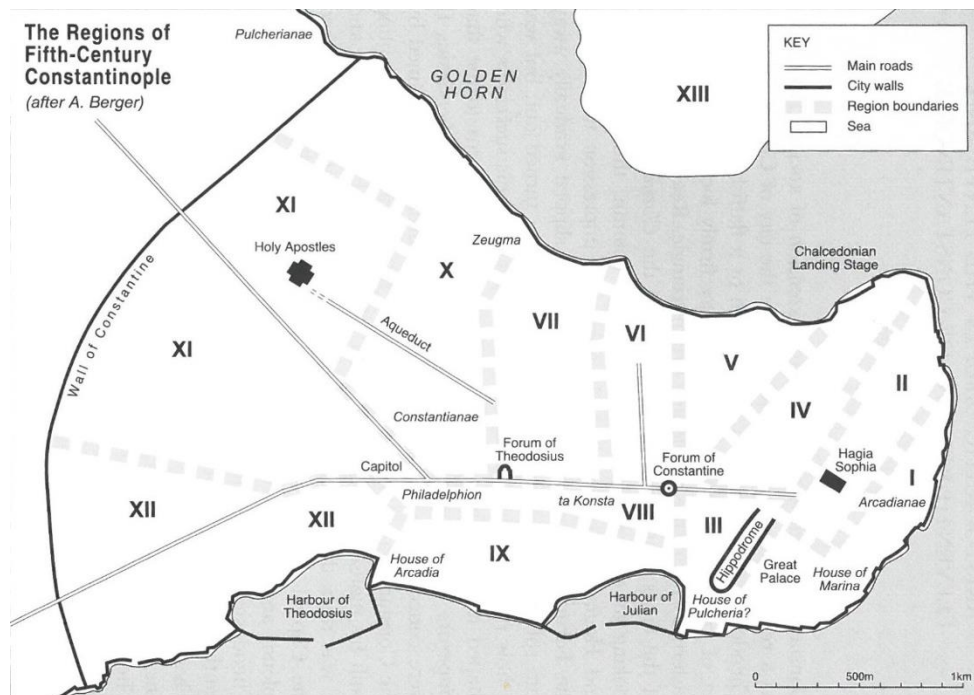


Figure Six: The fourteen regions of Constantinople.<sup>182</sup>

<sup>179</sup> Bardill 1999: 686; Matthews 2012a: 82-84.

<sup>180</sup> Angelova 2015: 152; Bardill 1999: 686; Matthews 2012a: 82, 84; Ward-Perkins 2012: 54.

<sup>181</sup> *Not. Urb. Con.* 4.8, 12.9, 10.7, 11.13, 2.12 respectively.

<sup>182</sup> Region fourteen was separated from the central city. Though its precise location is unknown, it has been suggested that region fourteen was located twelve miles north of the city at a settlement named Rhegion (*Regium* in Latin). See Matthews 2012a: 110-112.

These imperial houses should not be seen in isolation but surrounded by or closely connected to other important buildings within the centre of Constantinople. For instance, Pulcheria's house in region three shared the space with the Hippodrome, shown on the above figure, and was close to the Great Palace.<sup>183</sup> Her residence in region eleven was built near the Church of the Holy Apostles and the palace of her grandmother, Aelia Flaccilla.<sup>184</sup> Also shown on the figure above is Arcadia's house in region nine, which was constructed near two churches and the Theodosian granary and harbour.<sup>185</sup> In region ten, another church or martyrium, the baths of Constantine, renamed after Theodosius II in 427, and the houses of Galla Placidia and Eudocia surrounded this princess' building.<sup>186</sup> Finally, Marina's house, shown on figure six, was located in region one and built alongside the Great Palace, an additional palace and house for Galla Placidia, and the baths of Arcadius.<sup>187</sup> Therefore, through this brief glance of early fifth century Constantinople, one can see the strong presence of the entire Theodosian family throughout the city.<sup>188</sup>

Though the *Notitia* only lists these specific buildings, it is possible that at different periods throughout Theodosius II's reign they were occupied by members of the imperial house. We know that separation between the emperor and members of his family did occur during this period. For example, Arcadius, removed his stepmother, Galla, from the Great Palace in 390 and twenty years later in 410, Honorius held his court in Ravenna whilst his half-sister, Galla Placidia, lived in Rome.<sup>189</sup> Finally, Pulcheria's own retirement to a palace situated at the Hebdomon in 439 and Eudocia's move to Jerusalem in 441 further suggests that the separation between the emperor and his family members was practiced throughout his reign.<sup>190</sup>

It is not only their public presence throughout the city that indicates their image was continually utilised during Theodosius II's reign. Later literary evidence suggests that the sisters were also

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<sup>183</sup> *Not. Urb. Con.* 4.7.

<sup>184</sup> *Not. Urb. Con.* 12.6, 12.7.

<sup>185</sup> *Not. Urb. Con.* 10.5, 10.9. It is not specified which Theodosius this granary is named after.

<sup>186</sup> *Not. Urb. Con.* 11.9-12. *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 427; *Marcel. com.* s.a. 427.2 for the renaming of Constantine's baths. Matthews 2012a: 84.

<sup>187</sup> *Not. Urb. Con.* 2.8, 2.10-11, 2.13.

<sup>188</sup> Croke 2010; Magdalino 2001: 55-56.

<sup>189</sup> *Marcel. com.* s.a. 390.2, 410; *Zos.* 5.40.4; 41.4; 42.4; *Olymp. Frag.* 6.5-7 (in Blockley 1983). McEvoy 2013: 194.

<sup>190</sup> Her retirement is discussed further below. See Theoph. AM 5940.

involved in the construction of other buildings throughout the city. The *Chronicon Paschale* states:

...Arcadia and Marina respectively founded the Arcadianae bath and the mansion of Marina...Arcadia founded as well the church of St. Andrew called that of Arcadia.<sup>191</sup>

Though Marcellinus *comes* attributed the construction of these baths to Arcadius, Angelova has suggested that Arcadia's association with this building might be linked either to her role in completing its construction or her ongoing patronage for its upkeep.<sup>192</sup> Moreover, Pulcheria and Eudocia were also said to have similarly founded churches, which further reinforces the presentation of an ostentatiously pious family.<sup>193</sup> That these building programs survive in later literary tradition indicates that the long-term reception of this family closely correlated with contemporary accounts. As such, their reported involvement in the ecclesiastical life of the imperial city corresponds to Sozomen's description of the sisters' virtues, which in turn reinforced the presentation of imperial piety, a fundamental component in the adapted Eastern Theodosian image.

Angelova has recently assessed the purpose of multiple buildings associated with the imperial family in the city of Constantinople. She has stated that the spread of these imperially sponsored buildings in the different regions of the capital not only fostered the city's development by providing a centre point for new neighbourhoods to grow, but it also brought with it the feeling of 'authority and prestige of the Great Palace.'<sup>194</sup> Therefore, whether these buildings were regularly occupied or not, the association between the Theodosian women and these regions was perhaps a further attempt to disperse imperial presence throughout the city and to have their authority felt outside the palace complex in region one. Moreover, it was another way in which the populace could connect and perhaps interacted with the ruling family.

Two more points on imperial presence throughout the city should be mentioned here. First is the date of the *Notitia Urbis Constantinopolitanae*'s composition – sometime between 423 and 427. Considering Arcadia died in 444, Marina in 449 and Pulcheria in 453, it is quite probable

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<sup>191</sup> *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 396. ...τουτέστιν Ἀρκαδία ἔκτισε τὸ δημόσιον Ἀρκαδιανὰς, Μαρίνα δὲ τὸν οἶκον ἔκτισε τῶν Μαρίνης... ἡ δὲ Ἀρκαδία ἔκτισε καὶ τὸν οἶκον τοῦ ἁγίου Ἀνδρέου, ἐπὶ κληνὰ τὰ Ἀρκαδίας.

<sup>192</sup> *Marcel. com.* s.a. 394.4; Angelova 2015: 155.

<sup>193</sup> For example *Marcel. com.* s.a. 453.2; *Theoph.* AM 5920, 5942, 5943, 5945 (Pulcheria); *Anth. Gr.* 1.10; *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 444; *Evagr.* 1.22 (Eudocia).

<sup>194</sup> Angelova 2015: 148.

that more buildings, such as the church of St Andrew related in the *Chronicon Paschale*, were constructed throughout the city during the 430s and 440s.<sup>195</sup> Secondly, throughout this section I have only mentioned the buildings associated with Theodosius II's sisters and not those of the wider Theodosian family. Therefore, if the buildings connected to Theodosius I, Aelia Flaccilla, Arcadius, Honorius, Galla Placidia and Eudocia are considered, one can see that the landscape of mid-420s Constantinople was dominated by the Theodosian House.<sup>196</sup> However, for the purpose of this section, the numerous residences associated with Pulcheria, Arcadia and Marina suggest their ongoing presence in the promotion of imperial authority. They were not hidden from the people of Constantinople, nor did they remain behind the walls of the Great Palace, but actively contributed to the public image of their brother's reign.

### 3.1 An Imperial Couple

The image of unity between the four primary members of the Eastern Theodosian family was a key component in Theodosius II's adapted imperial image after 414. However, the elevation of his eldest sister, Pulcheria, to Augusta would suggest that her role was regarded as senior above Arcadia and Marina.<sup>197</sup> Through the analysis of contemporary numismatic material and literary evidence, this section will examine the public presentation of this young empress. It will suggest that her rise to the rank of Augusta in July 414 at the age of fifteen enabled the regime to portray an image of an imperial couple consisting of the empress and her younger brother. Therefore, by adapting the traditional image of an imperial couple, which usually involved the emperor and his wife, the regime was able to construct an image of continuity from their adult predecessors, and parents, Arcadius and Eudoxia. Moreover, this section will suggest that Pulcheria's elevation to Augusta and prominent presentation in the literary evidence was not intended to present Theodosius II as an incapable ruler. Rather, it was done to differentiate her position from her sisters and ensure she would be seen at the emperor's female counterpart.

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<sup>195</sup> Deaths: Marcel. *com.* s.a. 444.2 (Arcadia); Marcel. *com.* s.a. 449.1; *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 449 (Marina); *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 543; Theoph. AM 5945 (Pulcheria).

<sup>196</sup> Croke 2010 assessed Theodosius I's contribution to the city; McEvoy forthcoming 2019a examined its continuation under Arcadius. Also, see Bassett 2004 for a general overview of Theodosian civic construction.

<sup>197</sup> Arcadia and Marina were both *nobilissima*. *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 400 (Arcadia), 403 (Marina).



### *Imperial Women*

From the early days of the principate, images of imperial women appeared on centrally controlled imperial iconography. Julia, the daughter of Augustus, was first minted on imperial coinage alongside her two sons, and the *princeps*' adopted heirs, Gaius and Lucius Caesar in 13 BC.<sup>198</sup> However, her appearance on these types was not intended to construct the image of an imperial couple (as she was not elevated to Augusta), but rather to promote the dynastic continuation of Augustus' lineage.<sup>199</sup> This trend of representing imperial women as the personification of dynastic succession continued, to varying degrees, throughout the Julio-Claudian dynasty (27 BC-68 AD).<sup>200</sup> During the Nerva-Antonine dynasty (96-192), imperial women, namely the wife of the emperor, in central iconography were progressively portrayed as equal alongside their emperor.<sup>201</sup> The reign of Antoninus Pius (138-161) provided the earliest indication in the development of the emperor and his empress, Faustina I, as dual rulers of the Empire.<sup>202</sup>

The portrayal of Julia Domna, a member of the Severan dynasty (193-235), during the sole-reign of her son, Caracalla (198-217), furthered this presentation to an unprecedented level. Barbara Levick, who examined the public presentation of this wife, mother, and great-aunt to all ruling emperors of the dynasty, highlighted the growing importance of imperial women in the official image of a regime.<sup>203</sup> As mother to Caracalla (and Geta), her public portrayal contained many traditional maternal characteristics, with titles such as 'mother of the emperor(s)' and 'mother of a god.'<sup>204</sup> However, the continual use of her image, and the progressive adoption of numerous titles once associated only with the emperor, indicates her

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<sup>198</sup> RIC I<sup>2</sup> Augustus 404-405.

<sup>199</sup> Ginsburg 2006: 59; Hekster 2015: 117-119, 157-158.

<sup>200</sup> Agrippina the Younger is the notable outlier here who, by the time of her son Nero's reign, was the sister, wife, and mother of three consecutive emperors (Caligula, Claudius, and Nero respectively). She was the first living imperial woman to be minted in her own right on the obverse of imperial coinage (RIC I<sup>2</sup> Claudius 75) and played a prominent role in the early official imagery of Nero's reign and in establishing his authority. See RIC I<sup>2</sup> Nero 1-3, 6-7. Ginsburg 2006: 69-74; Hekster 2015: 131-132.

<sup>201</sup> Hekster 2015: 141.

<sup>202</sup> Hekster 2015: 141 who analysed the 'Antonine base' positioned at the Campus Martius at Rome. Cf. Levick 2014: 35-36. The growing importance of imperial women in the official iconography of the Empire is further highlighted by their increased presence on imperial coinage, which correlated with establishment of their own mint at Rome during this period. See Duncan-Jones 2006.

<sup>203</sup> Wife to Septimius Severus, mother to Caracalla, great-aunt to Elagabalus and Alexander Severus. Hekster 2015: 153-154.

<sup>204</sup> RIC IV Septimius Severus 562 (mother of the emperors); RIC IV Caracalla 382-383A (mother of a god). Hekster 2015: 146-147; Levick 2007: 74-78.

important public role alongside Caracalla.<sup>205</sup> Therefore, through these numerous extended titles, which correlated to ones granted to her son, Levick suggested that Julia Domna and Caracalla constituted a 'royal pair' who were portrayed as equal rulers of the Empire.<sup>206</sup> This portrayal of imperial co-operation by an emperor and his female counterpart was further adapted and utilised in the public image of later rulers of the Roman Empire.

By the time Theodosius II would come to rule the Eastern Empire from Constantinople, the Empire and the citizenry of the imperial capital expected the presentation of an imperial couple. First adopted during the reign of Theodosius I and Aelia Flaccilla, and continued in the public image of Arcadius and Eudoxia, this portrayal of a husband and wife imperial couple had been disseminated throughout the Empire for close to three decades. Though both empresses died years prior to their male counterparts, the image of a ruling pair would continue through the circulation of their coin types and on other forms of imperial iconography.<sup>207</sup> Due to this tradition, it was perhaps expected that after Theodosius II's full accession to emperor there would be an imperial couple once again, regardless of his youth.

The rank of Augusta, frequently used since Livia, wife of Augustus, was granted the status in 14, appears to be a prerequisite necessary for any imperial woman to be publicly presented as the emperor's counterpart.<sup>208</sup> When assessing the history of the Augustae, it becomes clear that there was no set rule behind the elevations of imperial women. The Augustae of the fourth and early fifth centuries in particular highlight the different situations surrounding these events. After infrequent use of the title during the later-third century and Tetrarchic period, Constantine in the mid-320s raised both his wife, Fausta, and mother, Helena to the rank of Augusta.<sup>209</sup> Their accession seems to coincide closely with the elevation of Constantius II to Caesar in 324.<sup>210</sup> Theodosius I appears to have utilised a similar situation to grant the title to Aelia

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<sup>205</sup> Levick 2007: 87-96 followed by Hekster 2015: 147-148. Titles include *Mater Augusti/imperatoris et castrorum et senatus et patriae* (RIC IV Caracalla 380-381) and *Pia Felix* (RIC IV Caracalla 382-383).

<sup>206</sup> Levick 2007: 93-95.

<sup>207</sup> Noreña 2011b: 256 suggested that coins could be in circulation throughout the Empire for decades, even a century, after its initial production. Aelia Flaccilla died in 386: Lib. *Or.* 20.4, 22.8; Claud. *IV Cons. Hon.* 158; Zos. 4.44.3.

<sup>208</sup> Quite consistently used during the first, second and early third centuries. Sporadic and rare elevations occurred during the later third and fourth centuries.

<sup>209</sup> Fausta coinage: RIC VII Treveri 442-445; Helena coinage: RIC VII Treveri 458, 465. All coins are dated between 324-325.

<sup>210</sup> RIC VII Treveri 488.

Flaccilla in 383, the same year Arcadius was proclaimed Augustus.<sup>211</sup> Finally, the wives of Arcadius, Theodosius II, and Valentinian III – Eudoxia, Eudocia and Licinia Eudoxia respectively – were all elevated after they bore imperial children in 400, 423 and 439.<sup>212</sup> Therefore, all these Augustae can be associated with the concept of dynastic promotion and continuation.

Unlike the majority of her predecessors, Pulcheria was a child, just fifteen, when she was raised to the rank of Augusta and had undertaken an oath that made marriage and childbearing impossible.<sup>213</sup> Therefore, one justification behind her elevation was in order to continue the dynastic tradition of presenting an imperial couple. As outlined above, this imagery of a male and female pair gained prominence during the lifetime of Julia Domna and her public presentation alongside her son, Caracalla. Under the Theodosians, the presentation of an imperial couple, first between Theodosius I and Aelia Flaccilla, and then Arcadius and Eudoxia, was familiar imagery on both centrally controlled iconography and within Constantinople by the time of Theodosius II's full accession to emperor in 408. This presentation of a ruling couple in the imperial city was an important image. Therefore, Pulcheria's rise to Augusta in 414 enabled the regime to promote an image of stability through the presentation of continuity, despite the obvious youth of the Eastern imperial family. That this portrayal was successful is suggested through the elevation of an even younger imperial female, Honoria, to the rank of Augusta in the West only eleven years later. As analysed at length in Chapter Three, the elevation of two child-Augustae in the early fifth century indicates the success of the Eastern Theodosian regime in portraying a young Augustus/Augusta couple similar to their parents and grandparents before them.

### *The Presentation of an Imperial Couple*

The contemporary numismatic evidence provides the best indication that an image of continuity was one justification behind Pulcheria's elevation. Similar to all other Augustae, after her rise to this rank, her image was continually minted on coinage alongside her brother,

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<sup>211</sup> Aelia Flaccilla: RIC IX Constantinople 48-49; Arcadius: RIC IX Constantinople 53A-53B; Soc. 5.10.5; Soz. 7.12.2.

<sup>212</sup> Eudoxia: *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 400; Eudocia: *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 423; Joh. Mal. 14.4-5; Licinia Eudoxia: RIC X Theodosius II (East) 269.

<sup>213</sup> McEvoy 2019: 119. She was the second imperial child to be elevated to the rank of Augusta. The first was Claudia, the daughter of Nero, who was elevated in 63 in the intervening months between her birth and death (Kienast et al. 2017: 92; Levick 2014: 35). After Pulcheria there are only two other reported child Augustae, Honoria, elevated aged 7/8 (see Chapter Three below) and Epiphania, daughter of Heraclius. See *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 612.

Theodosius II. That she was meant to represent the female half of the imperial couple is clear when you compare her early coinage to that of Aelia Flaccilla and Eudoxia. The first (figure seven) is from the Constantinopolitan mint (CONOB) for Aelia Flaccilla, struck shortly after her elevation in 383. The obverse depicts the bust of the empress, wearing a pearl diadem and elaborate jewellery, and the legend: AEL FLAC-CILLA AVG. The reverse depicts an enthroned Victory, holding a shield, which rests on a column, inscribed with Chi-Rho and the legend: SALVS REI-PVBLICAE, ‘well-being of the state’.



Figure Seven: *Solidus* of Aelia Flaccilla.

The second image (figure eight) is from the Constantinopolitan mint (CONOB) for Eudoxia, struck sometime between 400 and 404. The obverse is almost an exact replica of Aelia Flaccilla's coinage: the empress is shown wearing a pearl diadem and elaborate jewellery, with the legend AEL EVDO-XIA AVG. This legend is important as it shows that Eudoxia, who was not related to Flaccilla in any way, adopted her family name, Aelia, in imperial iconography.<sup>214</sup> This perhaps suggests that Eudoxia was meant to emulate her predecessor who, we will see, was renowned for her pious works and greatly loved by the populace of the city. Moreover, Eudoxia's obverse coin has a slight variation to her predecessors – the empress is crowned by the hand of God. First used on the coronation coinage of Arcadius in 383, Eudoxia's adoption of this image suggests that female imperial iconography developed to align with her male counterpart.<sup>215</sup> The reverse of this coin is the exact replica of Flaccilla's earlier coin: a seated Victory, the column supporting the shield inscribed with Chi-Rho and the legend SALVS REI PVBLICAE.

<sup>214</sup> Holum 1982: 22 n. 62 followed by Conner 2004: 54; James 2001: 101; Sivan 2011: 122. For its use in later iconography of fifth and sixth century empresses, see Garland 1999: 40.

<sup>215</sup> See RIC IX Constantinople 53A-53B for Arcadius' coronation coinage. James 2001: 105.



Figure Eight: *Solidus* of Aelia Eudoxia.

The final coin, (figure nine) is from the Constantinopolitan mint (CONOB) for Pulcheria, dated to her elevation in 414. The obverse is the exact replica of Eudoxia's coin above: the empress, wearing a pearl diadem and elaborate jewellery, is crowned by the hand of God. Similar to her two dynastic predecessors, the coin's legend identifies the empress as, AEL PVLCH-ERIA AVG. Just as her mother, the *nomen*, Aelia, was adopted on Pulcheria's coinage, which ensured a continuous depiction of Eastern Theodosian women in imperial iconography. Moreover, it is interesting to note that Pulcheria is shown on this coin as an adult, like her mother and grandmother, and not the fifteen-year-old girl that she was. Though the earlier images of Theodosius II's coinage from 402-408 suggest this was an expected portrayal of child Augusti, the fact that Pulcheria's coins are the earliest evidence of a child Augusta mint suggests that they emulated their male counterpart.<sup>216</sup> This adult presentation reinforces the suggestion that Pulcheria's elevation enabled the young couple to be presented similar to their adult predecessors. This is further supported by the reverse of Pulcheria's coin, which closely followed Aelia Flaccilla and Eudoxia: an enthroned Victory, holding a shield inscribed with Chi-Rho and the legend SALVS REI-PVBLICAE. The only deviations in Pulcheria's coronation coinage was the addition of the star in the left and the removal of the column that supported the shield. However, this was not a variant dated to this coin, but was implemented on earlier imperial coinage from 403.<sup>217</sup>



Figure Nine: *Solidus* of Aelia Pulcheria.

<sup>216</sup> Levick 2007: 140; Rowan 2011: 267.

<sup>217</sup> All four Augusti/Augusta coinage minted at Constantinople adopt this variation, see RIC X Arcadius 29 (Arcadius), 30 (Honorius), 31 (Theodosius II), 32 (Eudoxia).

Through the examination of these coins, we can see that Pulcheria's coin types are continuing the well-established female Eastern Theodosian iconography. As there were only slight variations between all three coins, it is often only the obverse legend that differentiated between the three Augustae. Through the uniformity of the reverse type, one can see that the image of the Theodosian Augustae was associated with the security and prosperity of the state – an image necessary during the reign of a child-emperor. That these coins circulated together publicly reinforced this image of stability, as well as promoting continuity between these successive dynastic members. Therefore, I suggest that the almost identical depiction of the three Theodosian Augustae on these coins indicates that Pulcheria was granted the title of Augusta in 414 in order to construct an image of continuity in the presentation of an imperial couple. This conclusion is strengthened when the empress' portrayal in the literary evidence is considered.

### *The Augusta and Piety*

When examining earlier Christian imperial couples, it becomes clear that one of the main roles of the female half was to encourage and foster the piety of the emperor. All three Christian Augustae that preceded Pulcheria – Helena, Aelia Flaccilla and Eudoxia – were renowned for their piety. Helena, who by the late-fourth century had become the Christian *exemplum* for imperial women, was ostentatiously lauded in numerous ancient sources for her pious activities, which included her devotion to God, her construction of churches, her pilgrimage to the Holy Land, her generosity and charitable acts.<sup>218</sup> Both Aelia Flaccilla and Eudoxia were presented in a similar fashion: Aelia Flaccilla was involved with churches and hospices in Constantinople and Eudoxia dedicated herself to the Holy Relics in the city.<sup>219</sup> According to Sozomen, Pulcheria's main role during Theodosius II's youthful years was to lead the emperor into pious acts. He states:

...she strove chiefly, to lead Theodosius into piety, and to pray continuously; she taught him to frequent the church regularly, and to honour the houses of prayer with gifts and treasures; and she inspired him with reverence for priests and other good men, and for those who, in accordance with the law of Christianity, had devoted themselves to philosophy.<sup>220</sup>

<sup>218</sup> Euseb. *Vit. Const.* 3.42-47; Amb. *de ob. Theod.* 43; Soc. 1.17; Soz. 2.1-2; Theod. *HE* 1.18. Brubaker 1997: 52; Drijvers 1992, 1993.

<sup>219</sup> Amb. *de ob. Theod.* 40; Theod. *HE* 5.19 (Flaccilla); Joh. Chrys. *Hom.* 2 in PG 63.468.9 in Mayer et al. 2000: 87 (Eudoxia). Holum 1982: 23-30, 56-58.

<sup>220</sup> Soz. 9.1.8-9. ὅς ἡκιστα δὲ εἰς εὐσέβειαν αὐτὸν ἦγε, συνεχῶς εὐχεσθαι καὶ ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις φοιτᾶν ἐθίζουσα καὶ ἀναθήμασι καὶ κειμηλίοις τοὺς εὐκτηρίους οἴκους γεραίρειν καὶ ἐν τιμῇ ἔχειν τοὺς ἱερέας καὶ ἄλλως ἀγαθοὺς ἄνδρας καὶ τοὺς νόμῳ Χριστιανῶν φιλοσοφούντας.

In this account, Pulcheria was depicted as an influential figure over Theodosius II – a common portrayal of the empress in Sozomen’s history. However, that she was only portrayed thus in matters related to piety suggests Sozomen was describing her role as Theodosius II’s female counterpart. Recalling his account of her vow of virginity, he described Pulcheria as the driving actor behind the event – it was through her instruction that Arcadia and Marina devoted themselves to God. As I stated earlier in this chapter, Sozomen portrayed her here as a motherly figure over her two younger sisters. Though this might be an accurate description of her relationship with Marina, who was only 10 in early 414, it is dubious whether the same could be said for Arcadia, who was only a year younger than Pulcheria. Therefore, if we did not know the birth years for the three Theodosian sisters from later sources, Sozomen’s portrayal of the eldest princess would have us assume that she was many years older than her female family members.

The same can be said for the description of Pulcheria’s relationship with Theodosius II, with whom she was only two years older. After 414, Sozomen states that Pulcheria took over her brother’s education and management of the palace. He claimed that the empress ensured the best men taught the emperor ‘in horsemanship...the practice of arms, and in letters.’<sup>221</sup> Moreover, the empress herself educated her brother on how to be orderly and princely in his manners, how to gather his robe, take a seat and walk.<sup>222</sup> She taught him to restrain his laugh, to be both mild and formidable when necessary, and to be courteous to those who came before him with petitions.<sup>223</sup> As we have already seen, Pulcheria also encouraged his piety through prayer, donations to the church and in respecting the clergy. Though some of Sozomen’s comments on Pulcheria’s actions have led some scholars to conclude the empress had a role in government, Jill Harries has recently noted that the type of activities she reportedly controlled were regulated to the domestic and religious spheres of society.<sup>224</sup> Therefore, by coupling these more traditional female duties with her role in encouraging Theodosius II’s piety, I would argue that Pulcheria’s influential depiction in the literary source material reflected her early role in the presentation of an imperial couple.

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<sup>221</sup> Soz. 9.1.6-7. ἀλλ’ ἱπικὴν μὲν καὶ τὴν ἐν τοῖς ὅπλοις καὶ τοῖς λόγοις ἄσκησιν παρὰ τῶν ἐπιστημόνων ἐξεδιδάσκετο.

<sup>222</sup> Soz. 9.1.7.

<sup>223</sup> Soz. 9.1.7. McEvoy forthcoming 2020.

<sup>224</sup> Traditional scholarship: Holum 1982: 97 followed by Chew 2006: 207. Cf. Harries 2013: 69.

This conclusion is strengthened when one considers that Theodosius II also reportedly encouraged his sister into pious acts, with Sozomen's history perhaps providing an indication of an equal relationship between the Augustus and Augusta. Towards the end of his account of the vow, the author stated that only after the direction (ἡγεμονίας) of Theodosius II did Pulcheria donate her holy table to the Church of Constantinople.<sup>225</sup> Therefore, Sozomen's retelling of this dedication added not only to the public nature of their actions, but also to the public awareness of the two working together. Moreover, it was not only in Book Nine of the history where Sozomen lauded the piety of the emperor. In the preface to work, which he dedicated to the emperor, Sozomen proclaimed that Theodosius II surpassed all his predecessors and, through the help of God, 'cultivated every virtue.'<sup>226</sup> Therefore, by combining the pious description of Theodosius II in the history's preface with the pious presentation of Pulcheria in Book Nine, there emerges a powerful image of an imperial couple who were equally connected through their pious acts.

That this was the dominant long-term reception of Pulcheria and Theodosius II's relationship in the literary evidence is indicated through an entry in Theophanes' ninth century *Chronographia*. At numerous times throughout his work, Theophanes commented on the imperial pair's piety, benefactions to churches, and their public role in relic translations.<sup>227</sup> However, there is one particular entry, dated to 428, in which the author described the Augustus and Augusta working together to reinforce their pious image.<sup>228</sup> Theophanes stated that in imitation of his sister, Theodosius II sent a great benefaction to the bishop of Jerusalem to support the poor and decorate the site of Christ's crucifixion. In return, the bishop sent to Constantinople the right hand of the proto-martyr Stephen, only discovered the year prior.<sup>229</sup> Pulcheria and Theodosius II went together and met the relics when they reached Chalcedon, and transported the remains to the palace before depositing them in a church built by the empress. Though some scholars have questioned the historicity of this account, the description

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<sup>225</sup> Soz. 9.1.4.

<sup>226</sup> Soz. Pref.1.3. σὺν δέ, ὃ κράτιστε βασιλεῦ Θεοδοσίῳ, συλλήβδην εἰπεῖν πᾶσαν ἐπήσκησας ἀρετὴν διὰ θεοῦ...

<sup>227</sup> For example, Theoph. AM 5930, 5942.

<sup>228</sup> Theoph. AM 5920.

<sup>229</sup> Theoph. AM 5919.



of Pulcheria and Theodosius II as a cohesive unit working together on religious matters reinforces their contemporary presentation of an imperial couple.<sup>230</sup>

One final piece of literary evidence further supports the hypothesis that the young brother-sister pair was portrayed as an imperial couple from 414 onwards. An entry, surviving in the *Chronicon Paschale* states:

[In 414]...3 portrait busts of Honorius and Theodosius Augusti, and of Pulcheria Augusta were dedicated in the senate by Aurelian...<sup>231</sup>

Though there is no archaeological evidence for these busts, we know through the 19<sup>th</sup> oration of the late-fourth century Eastern rhetorician, Themistius, that the act of placing imperial images in the Senate House was practiced. He stated that the bust of Aelia Flaccilla was placed in the Senate House in Constantinople alongside her co-Augusti, Theodosius I and Arcadius.<sup>232</sup> In this case, Aelia Flaccilla was quite clearly the other half of the imperial couple with her husband, and senior Augustus, Theodosius I. That Pulcheria was mentioned alongside her brother and her uncle, Honorius, indicates that in the seventh century, when the *Chronicon Paschale* was written, she and Theodosius II were remembered as an imperial couple from the early years of his reign. This connection between Pulcheria's public image and her grandmother further reinforces the suggestion that the young princess was elevated to Augusta in 414 so she and Theodosius II could be portrayed as an imperial couple. Moreover, that Aurelian, an official from the central government, placed these three busts in the Senate House further suggests that this image of continuity was promulgated by the regime. Therefore, if this entry is accurate, then the dedication occurred at the end of 414, after Pulcheria had gifted the table to the Church of Constantinople and the dissemination of her image on imperial coinage. As such, the placement of her bust in the Senate House only months later would have further reinforced the contemporary perception of Theodosius II and Pulcheria as an imperial couple and aided in the circulation of this image.

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<sup>230</sup> The 'Trier Ivory' is often thought to depict this event. See Holum 1977: 163; Holum et al. 1979; Holum 1982: 104, 106-109 followed by Brubaker 1999: 271-273. However, some have argued for much later empresses. See Spain 1977; Wortley 1980. Wilson 1984 unconvincingly argued the ivory portrayed the empress Eudoxia.

<sup>231</sup> *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 414. Καὶ αὐτῶ τῷ ἔτει ἀφιερώθησαν στηθάρια γ' ἐν τῇ συγκλήτῳ Ὁνωρίου καὶ Θεοδοσίου Αὐγούστων καὶ Πουλχερίας Αὐγούστης ἀπὸ Αὐρηλιανοῦ...

<sup>232</sup> *Them. Or.* 19.228B. James 2001: 42.

#### 4.1 A Growing Family

As we have seen, the earliest identifiable evidence to suggest the adaptation of the Eastern Theodosian image can be traced back to 414 with the communal vow of virginity made by the three Theodosian sisters. This act, coupled with the presentation of an imperial couple consisting of the young Pulcheria and Theodosius II, indicates that the regime adapted the established norms of imperial presentation to better suit their situation. However, Theodosius II did not remain a child for long and was expected, at some point during his reign, to incorporate another woman into his family – his wife, followed by any children born of this union. In 421, the then twenty-year-old emperor married the Athenian native Athenaïs, renamed Eudocia. Their union was quickly followed by the birth of their first and only surviving child, Licinia Eudoxia, and in 423 Eudocia was elevated to the rank of Augusta.<sup>233</sup> Though both were additions to the Theodosian family, Licinia Eudoxia only emerged as a prominent figure within Eastern imperial iconography after her marriage to the Western emperor, Valentinian III in 437. Her image was then utilised in the East as a secure connection between the two branches of the Theodosian house. For this reason, her portrayal in Eastern iconography will be analysed below in Chapter Three. Therefore, throughout this section I will address how the Eastern Theodosian image was adapted to incorporate his wife, Eudocia after her marriage in 421 and elevation to Augusta in 423.

#### *An Imperial Wedding*

The surviving literary evidence on Eudocia's early life states that she was a relative outsider with no prominent connections within the aristocracy in Constantinople. She was born, raised and educated in Athens by her father, the sophist, Leontius, and was, most importantly, a non-Nicaean Christian.<sup>234</sup> Though her familial obscurity perhaps made her a suitable candidate for Theodosius II, her religious status prior to 421 requires further discussion as it is at odds with the ostentatious pious image of the imperial family.<sup>235</sup> Therefore, considering that the image of the Eastern Theodosian family was founded on pious acts, the question of how a non-Nicene Christian contributed to this presentation needs to be examined. Socrates, our only surviving contemporary source on this topic, states:

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<sup>233</sup> Licinia Eudoxia's birth: Marcel. *com.* s.a. 422.1.

<sup>234</sup> Sources on Eudocia's early life: LSA 139 = IG II/III.13285; Soc. 7.21.8; Joh. Mal. 14.4; *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 421; Joh. Nik. 83.26-33; Olymp. Frag. 28 (in Blockley 1983); *V. Sym. Styl.* 130. Burnman 1994: 63-64; Cameron 2016: 67-68; Holum 1982: 112-115; Sironen 1990.

<sup>235</sup> For the discussion on her lack of family connections, see Holum 1982: 112-121.

...when the emperor had destined to marry her, the bishop Atticus, through baptism, made her a Christian and named her Eudocia instead of Athenais.<sup>236</sup>

Imperial baptisms were grandiose affairs in fifth century Constantinople. Taking, for example, Mark the Deacon's depiction of the city during Theodosius II's own baptism in 402, one can visualise the ceremonial pomp surrounding these events.<sup>237</sup> He described the city as gloriously decorated with garlands and adorned with silks, gold vessels and many other ornaments, and that the people looked like waves of the sea, dressed in all sorts of garments.<sup>238</sup> Of the imperial retinue, he claimed that, clad in white, their clothing shone as they surrounded the emperor Arcadius and baby Theodosius II, who were both wrapped in royal purple.<sup>239</sup> That Eudocia's incorporation into the imperial family required her baptism, and thus a recreation of the events described above, made her an attractive candidate for Theodosius II. Moreover, Socrates' timeline for these events further highlighted Eudocia's contribution to the imperial image, as it was only after the emperor decided to marry her was she then baptised. Therefore, by closely associating her conversion with the emperor, this act publicly reinforced Theodosius II's piety.

Later authors, beginning in the sixth century with John Malalas, followed closely by the seventh century *Chronicon Paschale*, have attested Pulcheria's involvement in the selection of Eudocia.<sup>240</sup> Though the authenticity of this later tradition has been thoroughly analysed by modern scholars, it is worth briefly discussing here to determine the later perception of the relationship between Theodosius II, Eudocia and Pulcheria.<sup>241</sup> John Malalas stated that after reaching adulthood the emperor pestered his sister, Pulcheria, into finding him a wife. What follows is a long account of the empress searching the aristocracy, first in Constantinople and then the wider Empire, until Eudocia was found. Pleased with the young woman, Pulcheria took her to the Great Palace and informed Theodosius II she found him a suitable bride.<sup>242</sup> Though Malalas described Pulcheria as the sister of the emperor, his portrayal of her was akin to a motherly figure. As discussed in the section below, this perception of a motherly Pulcheria

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<sup>236</sup> Soc. 7.21.9. Ταύτην ἥνικα ὁ βασιλεὺς ἐμελλεν ἄγεσθαι, Χριστιανὴν ὁ ἐπίσκοπος Ἀττικὸς ποιήσας ἐν τῷ βαπτίζειν ἀντὶ Ἀθηναΐδος Εὐδοκίαν ὠνόμασεν. Translation by author.

<sup>237</sup> For different arguments on the authenticity of Mark the Deacon, see Holum 1982: 55; Kelly 2013a: 1, n.1; Liebeschuetz 1990: 199-200; McEvoy forthcoming 2019a; Van Nuffelen 2012: 191.

<sup>238</sup> Mark the Deacon *V. Proph.* 47.

<sup>239</sup> Mark the Deacon *V. Proph.* 47.

<sup>240</sup> Joh. Mal. 14.3-4; *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 421; Theoph. AM 5911. Joh. Nik. 84.25-28 stated all three sisters were involved in this selection, which contributes to the overall image of familial unity.

<sup>241</sup> For different arguments relating to Pulcheria's involvement, see Cameron 2016: 69; Herrin 2001: 135; Holum 1982: 112-121.

<sup>242</sup> Joh. Mal 14.3-4. Cf. *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 421; Theoph. AM 5911.

and the new imperial couple Theodosius II and Eudocia was perhaps a reflection of the adaptation made to the imperial image after Eudocia's elevation to Augusta in 423. Moreover, the later literary description of this event further highlights another key component in the public image of the Eastern Theodosian family – familial unity. Though Pulcheria's actual involvement in this event has been questioned, what is important for this study is the modification made to the imperial image to incorporate the emperor's new wife. Therefore, through these accounts, one can see transformation of Pulcheria's public image from Theodosius II's female counterpart into a more motherly figure, and the celebration of collective unity between the emperor, his sister and his wife.

### *Eudocia the Augusta*

One year after the birth of their first and only surviving child in 422, Eudocia was elevated to the rank of Augusta.<sup>243</sup> As such, the imperial public image that once only involved Theodosius II and Pulcheria as the Augustus and Augusta developed to portray an image of a larger imperial family unit. Now Eudocia would be considered Theodosius II's female counterpart, with Pulcheria publicly presented as a motherly figure. Though later literary evidence would suggest some animosity between the two empresses, the surviving numismatic evidence, dated to Eudocia's elevation, shows that the three Eastern figures (one Augustus and two Augustae) were presented as a unified group. In 423, three *solidi* were minted in Constantinople (CONOB), portraying this new imperial unit. The first, figure ten, depicts a militarised Theodosius II on the obverse. He is shown cuirassed, wearing a helmet and pearl diadem, holding a spear and a shield, with the legend D N THEODO-SIVS P F AVG. A standing Victory is displayed on the reverse, holding a bejewelled long cross, a star above her head and a legend, which reads VOT XX-MVLT XXX.



Figure Ten: *Solidus* of Theodosius II.

<sup>243</sup> Birth: Marcel. *com.* s.a. 422; *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 421; Evagr. 1.20; Joh. Mal. 14.4; Augusta: *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 423.

The second coin, figure eleven, depicts an empress being crowned by the hand of God, wearing a pearl diadem and jewellery with the legend AEL PVLCH-ERIA AVG. Pulcheria's presentation on this coin mirrors her first appearance in 414 after her elevation to Augusta. The coin's reverse is the exact replica to Theodosius II's type – a standing Victory, holding a bejewelled long cross and star above her head, with the legend VOT XX-MVLT XXX. This reduplication of the same reverse type on Pulcheria's coin is significant as it was only the second time thus far in Theodosius II's reign in which the Eastern Augustus and Augusta had a matching depiction.<sup>244</sup> Taken by themselves, these two coins would suggest that the regime was reinforcing the public portrayal of Theodosius II and Pulcheria as the imperial couple. However, when you consider the final coin in this series the promotion of a couple was not the message expressed through these mints.



Figure Eleven: *Solidus* of Aelia Pulcheria.

Figure twelve shows the earliest coin minted to depict the newly elevated Eudocia. Her depiction on the obverse is an almost exact mirror of Pulcheria's coin above. The empress is being crowned by the hand of God, wearing her pearl diadem and jewellery, with the legend AEL EVDO-CIA AVG. Eudocia's portrayal not only aligned with the three other Theodosian Augustae, but also the adoption of the name, Aelia, closely connected her to her imperial predecessors.<sup>245</sup> The reverse of this coin is once again an exact imitation of Theodosius II and Pulcheria's coin discussed above: Victory, standing, holding a bejewelled long cross, with a star above her head, and the legend VOT XX-MVLT XXX. Therefore, through these three coins, perhaps disseminated together in celebration of Eudocia's elevation to Augusta, one can see the adaptation of the imperial image. The portrayal of an imperial couple, which had involved, for almost ten years, Theodosius II and Pulcheria, now changed to a wider family unit to include the emperor's new wife.

<sup>244</sup> The first time occurred sometime between 420 and 422, prior to Eudocia's elevation. See RIC X Theodosius II (East) 219 (Theodosius II), 220 (Pulcheria). Holum 1982: 109-110.

<sup>245</sup> Just like Eudoxia, Eudocia had no blood connection with Aelia Flaccilla.



Figure Twelve: *Solidus* of Aelia Eudocia.

Similar to the images of Aelia Flaccilla and Eudoxia, Pulcheria and Eudocia's coins were almost the exact replica of each other – without the obverse legend, there would be no discernible way to differentiate the two empresses. This lack of distinction further suggests that the Eastern Theodosian regime adapted the imperial image to present their three figures, one Augustus and two Augustae, as interconnected. This was not the first time in Roman history where both the wife and sister of the emperor were Augustae. During the reign of Trajan, the Roman Senate simultaneously elevated his wife, Pompeia Plotina, and sister, Ulpia Marciana, to Augusta.<sup>246</sup> In his panegyric to the emperor, Pliny the Younger commented on their relationship:

United as they are in the purpose of their daily life, nothing can be shown to divide them; their one aim is to model themselves on your example, and consequently their habits are the same, being formed after yours.<sup>247</sup>

Though we cannot say whether Theodosius II or his regime knew of this panegyric to Trajan, the image of an interconnected trio of an Augustus and two Augustae was not unprecedented. Therefore, Pliny's depiction of Pompeia Plotina and Ulpia Marciana might be applied here.<sup>248</sup> In this extract, Pliny portrayed the two Augustae as a unified pair who collectively worked together and modelled themselves on the actions of their emperor. In the opening line of this excerpt, the panegyrist stated that they were so united in their purpose that nothing could divide them. This presentation of a cohesive imperial unit was perhaps what the image the Eastern Theodosian regime wanted to promote after the elevation of Eudocia in 423 and the dissemination of three almost identical coin types.<sup>249</sup>

<sup>246</sup> Plin. *Pan.* 84.6. RIC II Trajan 725, 728-741 (Pompeia Plotina); RIC II Trajan 742-750 (Ulpia Marciana). Kienast et al. 2017: 119-120 dated their elevation between 100 and 105.

<sup>247</sup> Plin. *Pan.* 84.4-5. *Idem utrique propositum, idem tenor vitae, nihilque ex quo sentias duas esse; te enim imitari, te subsequi student. Ideo utraque mores eosdem, quia utraque tuos habet...*

<sup>248</sup> That Theodosius I claimed ascendancy to Trajan might be evidence to conclude that this panegyric was known by the Theodosian dynasts. However, this is extremely speculative, as there survives no firm evidence to suggest Theodosius II was educated on this topic. However, that Pliny the Younger was still well known and studied throughout Late Antiquity see, Gibson et al. 2013: 144.

<sup>249</sup> A presentation that continued on coinage for the next three decades. See RIC X Theodosius II (East) 255 (Pulcheria), 256 (Eudocia), 257 (Theodosius II), 286 (Theodosius II), 288 (Pulcheria), 289 (Eudocia).

If this interpretation were accepted, it would then justify not only Pulcheria and Eudocia's ongoing influential depiction throughout Theodosius II's reign, but also account for the emergence in later literature of the competition between the two women. Though later animosity might have emerged privately between the two Augustae, these coins suggest that the contemporary presentation publicised by the regime after Eudocia's elevation continued along the theme of uniformity and co-operation. Therefore, by minting three coins, all with the same reverse type, the now three Eastern imperial figures, one Augustus and two Augustae, portrayed a collective image of imperial unity. Through this assessment, one can see that the image, which was initially established between Pulcheria and Theodosius II in 414, was developed to incorporate another Augusta, Eudocia. Therefore, from 423 onwards this aspect of the imperial image, which once only presented a ruling pair, was adapted to portray a ruling unit.

### 5.1 Enduring through Change

Between 438 and 441, two events occurred which might have destabilised the image of unity between Theodosius II, Pulcheria and Eudocia. In 439, Pulcheria retired from the Great Palace in Constantinople and moved to a smaller imperial residence at the Hebdomon, where she remained until early 450. In 441, Eudocia permanently relocated to Jerusalem, a place she had triumphantly visited only two years prior. It was here that she would live out the rest of her life, never returning to the imperial capital.<sup>250</sup> Therefore, for the final decade of Theodosius II's reign, he was without either of his Augustae who had portrayed, at different times, the female component of the imperial couple. Despite these events, the absence of Pulcheria and Eudocia in Constantinople does not appear to have negatively affected the public image of the regime. Rather, Eudocia's activities in Jerusalem and Pulcheria's retirement to the Hebdomon contributed to the well-established Eastern Theodosian image in the imperial city. Therefore, this final section will examine these two events to explore how they were manipulated in order to reinforce key components of the regime's public image.

#### *Coinage of Eudocia and Pulcheria*

Coinage minted in Constantinople (CONOB) from the final decade of Theodosius II's reign suggests that, despite their absence from the imperial capital, the image of Pulcheria and

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<sup>250</sup> She died in 460 and was buried in Jerusalem. Evagr. 1.22. Cf. Theoph. AM 5947 who placed her death at 454/5.



Eudocia was utilised in official imperial iconography. Continuing the well-established precedent, the depiction of these Augustae were near identical, with only the obverse legends differentiating the two women. For example, figure thirteen and fourteen highlight their continued uniform presentation on imperial coinage minted and disseminated sometime between 441 and 450. Therefore, even after both empresses retired from court life in Constantinople their image was still produced on imperial coinage, with the presentation of unity maintained.



Figure Thirteen: *Solidus* of Aelia Pulcheria.



Figure Fourteen: *Solidus* of Aelia Eudocia.

The numismatic evidence from this decade further suggests that the wider presentation of imperial co-operation between the three imperial figures was still promoted by the central regime. This is clear when you consider Theodosius II's coinage (figure fifteen) produced in conjunction with the Pulcheria and Eudocia types above. The reverse of the emperor's coin is the exact replica of his wife and sister: an enthroned Constantinopolis, helmeted, holding a cross and globe in her right hand and sceptre in her left, with a small round shield on her right side and a star in the left field. Taken together, these three coins suggest that despite the change within the family, the regime still portrayed the image of unity and collegiality first established in 414 and adapted in 423. Moreover, the use of Constantinopolis, the personification of Constantinople, on this coin type is also significant as it connected the Augustae to the imperial city. Therefore, although retired from public life in the capital, the image of these imperial women was still utilised by the regime and connected to the emperor.



Figure Fifteen: *Solidus* of Theodosius II.

This conclusion is strengthened when one considers that the dissemination of these three matching coins shown here was not an isolated occurrence during Theodosius II's final decade.



Numerous other coin types minted in Constantinople throughout the 440s reinforced this image of imperial unity and co-operation.<sup>251</sup> The contemporary numismatic evidence suggests that the official image of the Eastern Theodosian family remained consistent during this time despite the retirement of the two Augustae. Therefore, it is necessary to consider the reception of these two events in the later literature and determine how they were adapted by the central regime in order to promote the imperial image. As such, the following discussion will first address Eudocia's pilgrimages in 438 and 441 and conclude with Pulcheria's retirement to the Hebdomon in 439.

### *Eudocia's Pilgrimage*

Eudocia's first pilgrimage to the Holy Land, from 438 to 439, was an outstanding success for promoting the piety of the imperial family as she was the first imperial woman to embark on the journey since Helena's visit over a century earlier.<sup>252</sup> Through this connection, Eudocia's actions could be closely associated with the woman who had become, by this time, the epitome of a virtuous empress.<sup>253</sup> Socrates, our only contemporary source on the event, related that Eudocia's time away from the capital was spent adorning churches, both in the Holy Land and other cities in the East.<sup>254</sup> Though his account highlighted her active role in perpetuating the image of Theodosius II's female counterpart, later sources outline how this pilgrimage once again publicly connected the two Augustae. Marcellinus *comes* states that Eudocia brought back relics of the proto-martyr Stephen, which she deposited in the basilica of Saint Laurence.<sup>255</sup> This is not the first time the relics of this saint were reportedly brought into the city by a Theodosian empress. As we have already seen, Theophanes claimed that in 428 Pulcheria had the right hand of the martyr brought to Constantinople and placed in a special

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<sup>251</sup> For example see: RIC X Theodosius II (East) 291 (Theodosius II), 295 (Pulcheria) and 296 (Eudocia); X Theodosius II (East) 298 (Theodosius II), 303 (Pulcheria) and 304 (Eudocia); X Theodosius II (East) 316 (Pulcheria), 318 (Eudocia) and 319 (Theodosius II); X Theodosius II (East) 324 (Theodosius II), 326 (Pulcheria) and 328 (Eudocia). Also interesting is that Valentinian III, and sometimes Galla Placidia and Licinia Eudoxia, were also minted within these grouping alongside their Eastern Augusti, further reinforcing the idea of imperial unity that stretched to both halves of the Empire. This will be discussed in Chapter Three.

<sup>252</sup> Euseb. *Vit. Const.* 3.42-45; Ruf. *HE* 10.7; Soc. 1.17; Soz. 2.1-2; Theod. *HE* 1.18.

<sup>253</sup> She could also be seen as a 'New Helena'. Brubaker 1997: 62; Dietz 2005: 136; Drijvers 1992: 55-72; Holum 1982: 188; Hunt 1983: 229; James 2001: 14, 152.

<sup>254</sup> Soc. 7.47.2-3. Καὶ τὴν γαμετὴν Εὐδοκίαν ἐπὶ τὰ Ἱεροσόλυμα ἔπεμπε· καὶ γὰρ αὐτὴ ταύτην εὐχὴν ἐπιτελέσειν ἐπηγγέλλετο, εἰ τὴν θυγατέρα γαμηθεῖσαν ἐπόψηται. Ἀλλὰ αὕτη μὲν καὶ τὰς περὶ Ἱεροσόλυμα ἐκκλησίας καὶ πάσας τὰς ἐν ταῖς ἀνατολικαῖς πόλεσιν ποικίλοις ἐτίμησεν <οικοδομήμασιν>, ἔν τε τῷ ἀπιέναι καὶ αὐθις ἐπανιοῦσα. Cf. V. *Mel. Young*. 56 claimed that Melania encouraged Theodosius II to send his wife to the Holy Land.

<sup>255</sup> Marcel. *com.* s.a. 439.2.

chapel in which she had built.<sup>256</sup> Though the translation at this time is most likely legend, the Augusta did complete the construction of this chapel, attested as the basilica of Saint Laurence, in 453.<sup>257</sup> Therefore, it is likely, as Cameron has argued that Eudocia's relics were deposited at the site of the future basilica to celebrate the beginning of its construction.<sup>258</sup> This conspicuous display of co-operation between the two Augustae in 439 closely connects the image of unity portrayed in the numismatic evidence. Though the two women are not presented together within the surviving literary tradition, by collating these accounts and comparing their reported actions, one can suggest that there was a cohesiveness in their public presentation up to this period.

Eudocia's first pilgrimage to Jerusalem greatly contributed to the overt pious image of the imperial family and was considered a great achievement for the Augusta. However, her second and final journey, only two years later, was shrouded in the later literary tradition with rumours of adultery, deception, and death.<sup>259</sup> Her omission from the two contemporary accounts that post-date her retirement, Sozomen and Theodoret, suggests that there was some separation between the emperor and his wife after her relocation. However, that no wider nor long-term public scandal followed the empress or Theodosius II indicates that her presence in Jerusalem was successfully manipulated to benefit the image of the regime in Constantinople. As Eudocia's triumphant return from the Holy Land occurred less than two years earlier, her second journey further ostentatiously highlighted her piety and that of her family and allowed another opportunity for her image to be associated with Helena. It appears that this connection was valuable for the imperial family as Eudocia's coinage was continually disseminated throughout the Empire during this period. Therefore, by continually minting her image on coins in Constantinople, the regime could promote this association, which, in turn, reinforced Theodosius II's pious image.

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<sup>256</sup> Theoph. AM 5920; Cameron 2016: 70. Holum 1977: 163; Holum et al. 1979: 127-129 argued that the bones were brought into the city in 421.

<sup>257</sup> For more on the bones, see Clark 1982. That it is a legend see: Mango 2004: 29-33; Wortley 1980: 381-394. For the construction see: Marcel. *com.* s.a. 453; Limberis 1994: 52; Wortley 1980: 385.

<sup>258</sup> Cameron 2016: 70.

<sup>259</sup> See especially Joh. Mal. 14.8; *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 444; Nestorius *Bazaar* 379; Theoph. AM 5940. Cf. Joh. Nik. 87.13. Cameron 2016:59. As it is not the purpose of this thesis to determine the credibility of these accounts, this section will assess how the Eastern Theodosian image was adapted after Eudocia's permanent absence from Constantinople.

Though we have no surviving contemporary accounts that connected Eudocia's actions with Helena, later evidence indicates the positive reception of her time in the Holy Land. In a seventh century Coptic account, *Eudoxia and the Holy Sepulchre: A Constantinian Legend in Coptic*, the author states that a certain Eudoxia, the virgin sister of Constantine, unearthed Christ's burial site.<sup>260</sup> That Eudocia's actions in Jerusalem inspired the creation of this 'Eudoxia' in later Coptic tradition is suggested through the Theodosian empress' intensive building program in the Holy Land during her twenty-year stay.<sup>261</sup> Evagrius claimed that she restored the walls of Jerusalem and built a sanctuary for the proto-martyr Stephen.<sup>262</sup> John of Nikiu further credited Eudocia with the reconstructing of churches, a hospice for pilgrims and convents for religious virgins.<sup>263</sup> It was this hospice for pilgrims that was built next to Christ's burial site and found, according to the Coptic tradition, by Eudoxia.<sup>264</sup> It would perhaps be extraordinary if Eudocia's presence in Jerusalem did not contribute to the creation of this otherwise unknown Eudoxia. Scholarship on this account has only attributed Eudocia as the blueprint for the Eudoxia narrated in the Coptic legend.<sup>265</sup> However, I would argue that this Eudoxia is an amalgamation of the pious actions of both Eudocia and Pulcheria, which occurred as a result of more than thirty years of promulgating an image of imperial unity and piety. That Eudocia in the story was the virgin sister of the emperor Constantine further reinforces this conclusion.

Though Eudocia would outlive Theodosius II, Pulcheria, Arcadia and Marina, her memory would continue to be remembered favourably throughout the Eastern Empire. Moreover, her actions in Jerusalem in the last twenty years of her life would continue to promote the image of the Eastern Theodosian house. Her burial in the church, which she built for Saint Stephen, not only connected her to her earlier actions in Constantinople, but also continually reinforced the relationship between the imperial capital and the Holy Land.<sup>266</sup> She was not the only Theodosian woman to set foot in Jerusalem, but she was the first to revitalise the connection between the imperial court and this holy centre.<sup>267</sup> Therefore, though removed from

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<sup>260</sup> *Eudoxia and the Holy Sepulchre*: 77-79. Constantine also made her queen and 'put upon her head the crown of the kingdom. *Eudoxia and the Holy Sepulchre*: 65.

<sup>261</sup> Drake 1979: 387-388.

<sup>262</sup> Evagr. 1.22. cf. Joh. Nik 87.21-22.

<sup>263</sup> Joh. Nik. 87.21.

<sup>264</sup> Drake 1979: 388.

<sup>265</sup> Drake 1979: 387-388.

<sup>266</sup> Klein 2011/2012: 91.

<sup>267</sup> Theoph. AM 5964. Eudocia's granddaughter, Eudocia, who is said to have lived in Jerusalem only days prior to her death in 474.

Constantinople and separated from her husband, the image and memory of Eudocia was continually utilised by the Theodosian regime to promote the ostentatious piety of this family.

### *Pulcheria's Retirement*

The numismatic evidence has shown that Pulcheria's image was still produced even after her retirement from the court in Constantinople to a palace at the Hebdomon in 439. Therefore, similar to Eudocia, it appears that the wider Theodosian regime maintained the image of unity and co-operation between the Augustus and Augustae. However, just as Eudocia's journey to the Holy Land was examined in relation to how it contributed to the public image of the family, Pulcheria's retirement to the Hebdomon palace must also be assessed. Therefore, throughout this final section I will show how Pulcheria's move in 439 was cleverly adapted by the Eastern Theodosian regime to promote key components of the imperial image, just as Eudocia's time in Jerusalem contributed to the presentation of a pious emperor.

There are two noteworthy justifications within the literary evidence that explained Pulcheria's retirement from public life. John of Nikiu wrote that after Pulcheria tricked Theodosius II into signing Eudocia into slavery, the irate emperor separated himself from his sister.<sup>268</sup> Conversely, Theophanes stated that Eudocia, under the persuasion of the eunuch Chrysaphius, was frustrated with Pulcheria's status within the household, which resulted in her departure from the Great Palace to the Hebdomon.<sup>269</sup> Similar to Eudocia's move to Jerusalem, Pulcheria's retirement from court life did not result in any immediate or long-term scandal for Theodosius II and the regime. Moreover, as both authors employed literary tropes in their description of this event, it is possible the real reason behind her move was never known. For John of Nikiu, the author portrayed the empress as a dominant figure over her brother. Though this has been the prominent presentation of the empress in modern literature, as this chapter has shown, there are other ways to understand this relationship. Moreover, John of Nikiu's portrayal of Pulcheria was perhaps influenced by his religious belief as a non-Chalcedonian. As Watts has recently shown, throughout his description of Theodosius II's reign, the author continually constructed the emperor and Eudocia as the pious imperial couple, and Pulcheria and future husband, Marcian, as an impious pair.<sup>270</sup> The above episode, Watts argued, served

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<sup>268</sup> Joh. Nik. 87.29-33.

<sup>269</sup> Theoph. AM 5940.

<sup>270</sup> Watts 2013: 279.

to show her domineering nature and her attempts at weakening the authority of her brother.<sup>271</sup> Conversely, Theophanes' account contained the trope of an evil and conniving eunuch who created discord within the imperial family. Utilised regularly throughout Roman literature, Theophanes' employment of this trope suggests that there may have been nothing beyond speculation and rumour to justify Pulcheria's move.<sup>272</sup>

When one considers Pulcheria's reported role in the elevation of Marcian after Theodosius II's death, it appears that the empress' image remained largely untarnished and her imperial authority still prevalent in 450.<sup>273</sup> Moreover, her prominent place in Sozomen's history further suggests her ongoing presence in the official image of the regime. However, just as Eudocia's omission from the contemporary histories post-dating her move to Jerusalem suggested some level of separation between husband and wife, Socrates' omission of Pulcheria's name, published shortly after her move, implies the same.<sup>274</sup> Though this was probable, the choice of her new residence suggests that her retirement was manipulated in such a way to benefit the public image of the Eastern Theodosian house. As outlined in an earlier section of this chapter, by the late 420s the *Notitia Urbis Constantinopolitanae* related that Pulcheria had two separate houses associated with her name in central Constantinople.<sup>275</sup> Therefore, that neither of these homes were selected for her retirement, but one outside the walls at the Hebdomon requires further comment. This is not the first time during Theodosius II's reign where Pulcheria's image was connected to the Hebdomon. As we saw above, in the early 420s a victory monument was dedicated to Theodosius II, in which the 'vows of the sisters' were credited to 'having pacified' the enemy. Therefore, for almost two decades Pulcheria, alongside her two sisters, had been connected to the safety and security of the Empire. Her presence in the outer suburb of the imperial city for almost ten years, from 439 until 450, perhaps served as a public reminder for the connection between her piety and this security. Though there is rumour concerning the justification behind Pulcheria's retirement that she relocated to a region only

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<sup>271</sup> Watts 2013: 276-279, esp. 278. Theoph. AM 5941 also included this story in his *Chronographia*, though made no connection between the act and Pulcheria's retirement.

<sup>272</sup> His account is probably originally derived from the contemporary, Priscus who is often hostile against Chrysaphius. For Priscus' hostility towards Chrysaphius, see Prisc. Frag. 3.1, 11.1-2 (in Blockley 1983). For conniving eunuchs in ancient literature, see Hopkins 1963; Scholz 2001: 81-119; Sidéris 2002; Tougher 2002.

<sup>273</sup> Burgess 1993/1994. Though Burgess reassessed the role Pulcheria played in the selection and elevation of Marcian, it is still important to note that her marriage to the future emperor was enough to legitimise his position. Also, see McEvoy 2019: 123-124.

<sup>274</sup> Socrates did mention the sister's collectively though, as examined above.

<sup>275</sup> In region three and eleven.

seven miles outside central Constantinople, and to an area that held strong ceremonial significance, suggests the regime manipulated this event to benefit the wider imperial image.

The two events that occurred in the final decade of Theodosius II's reign show not only the durability of the public image of the Eastern Theodosian family, but also further reinforces its ability to adapt to the changing situation within this family. It shows the calculating nature of the regime and its success in manipulating potentially scandalous events to its benefit. As the contemporary numismatic evidence suggested, neither Augustae were removed from the public presentation of the imperial family. Moreover, as shown throughout this section, Eudocia and Pulcheria's respective retirements from Constantinople positively contributed to the public image of the imperial family. Eudocia was allowed to live out her days in the Holy Land, continually reinforcing not only her own piety but also that of her family, with Pulcheria's retirement to the Hebdomon allowing the regime to reassert the connection between the piety of the emperor's sisters and the security of the Empire.

### 6.1 Conclusion

Unity and piety were key themes in the public image of the Eastern Theodosian family, as has been highlighted throughout all four sections of this chapter. By first analysing the earliest evidence to suggest an adapted image in 414, this chapter has shown that these themes were present from the inception of Theodosius II's new public presentation. Moreover, by comparing the literary portrayal of this public image to the Hebdomon inscription, this chapter has suggested that despite the stress placed on Pulcheria's role, all three sisters were present in this image, with their public actions in Constantinople actively contributing to Theodosius II's long-term stability as emperor. Through the analysis of this contemporary material, section one highlighted the continuity in the association between the piety of the imperial family and Theodosius II's victory in war. Section two also proposed, through a re-assessment of Pulcheria's depiction on numismatic material and within the literature, that her public role was to serve as the female counterpart of the emperor. By likening her portrayal on contemporary coinage with the depiction of her two Theodosian predecessors, Aelia Flaccilla and Eudoxia, this section suggested that her elevation in 414 occurred so that she and Theodosius II could be presented as a young imperial couple. In doing this, the young couple could be seen as continuing a tradition re-established by their Theodosian predecessors.

By assessing key events in the later reign of Theodosius II, sections three and four highlighted the ongoing development of the imperial image after 414. It first addressed how Eudocia's baptism, prior to her marriage to Theodosius II, contributed to the public piety of this emperor and assessed the development of Pulcheria's image into a motherly figure in later literary sources. Moreover, through the analysis of the numismatic evidence dated to the elevation of Eudocia to Augusta in 423, section three concluded that her accession did not detract from Pulcheria's public role beside Theodosius II. Rather, through this material, we found that an image of unity and connectedness between the three figures, one Augustus and two Augustae, was continually promoted. Finally, the two events in 439 and 441, which resulted in Pulcheria's retirement to the Hebdomon palace and Eudocia's permanent move to the Holy Land, highlighted the ability of this image to adapt to changes within the imperial city. The coinage minted from Constantinople indicated that the public portrayal of unity between Theodosius II, Pulcheria and Eudocia was continually promoted despite the absence of the two Augustae from court life. Moreover, section four concluded that these two events were manipulated by the Eastern Theodosian regime to promote the established imperial image: Pulcheria's presence at the Hebdomon reinforced the connection between the imperial family's piety and military security, and Eudocia's retirement to the Holy Land ostentatiously promoted her piety and that of her family. Though the contemporary source material would suggest that there was some separation between the emperor and his two Augustae at this time, this section has shown the ways in which the regime managed to present them as acts that benefitted the Eastern Theodosian image.

## Theodosius II and Constantinople

### 1.1 Introduction

Public ceremonies were an important and entrenched aspect of Roman life, with a history stretching back to the Republic.<sup>276</sup> It was a way for the political elite, senators during the Republic and emperors and his family during the *principate*, to promote their power and position to the watching populace.<sup>277</sup> As such, ceremonies were an important component in Roman life. During later antiquity, primarily from the late third century onwards, the role of ceremonies in communicating imperial power to the Roman people increased.<sup>278</sup> The importance of these events as a means of articulating an emperor's authority is highlighted during the period of successive child-emperors in the later fourth century.<sup>279</sup> As these young emperors could not, nor were expected, to fulfil the role of an active military leader, ceremonial events provided an opportunity for their wider regimes to highlight other imperial virtues, such as Christian piety.<sup>280</sup> Coinciding with the child-emperor phenomenon in the fourth century was the increasingly sedentary nature of Roman rulers. While Western cities such as Milan, Ravenna and Rome experienced extended periods of imperial presence during the fourth and fifth centuries, by 380 Constantinople became the imperial capital of the Eastern Roman Empire.<sup>281</sup> Due to this sedentary nature, the relationship between the city populace and the emperor grew in importance, with ceremonial events providing the means of interaction.

By the time of Theodosius II's full accession to Eastern Roman Emperor in 408, Constantinople had been home to the Theodosian family for almost three decades. Throughout this period, the city had transformed from a transit camp into an imperial capital due to the extensive building program initiated by Theodosius I and continued by Arcadius.<sup>282</sup> In continuing the tradition of his father, Theodosius II lived and ruled within this city for the majority of his life. Moreover, as a non-campaigning emperor, he used public ceremonies to connect with the populace of Constantinople and promote key components of his imperial image. Therefore, this chapter analyses the public behaviour of Theodosius II in Constantinople through a number of imperial

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<sup>276</sup> For example, Polyb. 6.15.6-8; Cic. *Sest.* 50.115; Livy *Epit.* 3.63. Flower 2014: 382-383; Hawkins 2017: 139; Östenberg 2009: 4.

<sup>277</sup> Flower 2014: 378; Welch 2007: 5.

<sup>278</sup> MacCormack 1981: 162-164.

<sup>279</sup> McEvoy 2013.

<sup>280</sup> McEvoy 2010: 159-162, 163-170.

<sup>281</sup> Croke 2010 (East); Gillett 2001 (West).

<sup>282</sup> Croke 2010 (Theodosius I); McEvoy forthcoming 2019a (Arcadius). Fourth century emperors in Constantinople: Soc. 1.40, Soz. 2.34 (Constantius II); Amm. Marc. 22.2.3-4 (Julian); Amm. Marc. 2.6.4.3-4, Soc. 4.38, Soz. 6.39 (Valens).



ceremonies. It first examines four positive examples of an adult emperor interacting with his people during these events: (i) the impromptu hymn-singing in the Hippodrome to deter an impending storm in the early 420s; (ii) the triumphal celebrations in the Hippodrome after the defeat of the usurper John in 425; (iii) the reinterment of the rehabilitated patriarch of Constantinople, John Chrysostom in 438; and (iv) the ‘piety walk’ after the destructive earthquake in 441. This chapter then investigates the only surviving negative example of Theodosius II’s interaction with the people, when he was attacked at the public granaries in 431, to highlight the difficulties in maintaining public favour.

This chapter will show how Theodosius II embraced and adapted existing traditions of imperial involvement in ceremonies in Constantinople. It will argue that this emperor did not simply recycle traditional elements involved in these events; rather he reinvented them to ensure they aligned with his adapted imperial image. Key concepts of the Eastern Theodosian image, such as the connection between imperial piety and security, and the image of unity will emerge throughout this discussion. Therefore, as this chapter examines the reported behaviour and actions of Theodosius II during imperial ceremonies, this study provides the clearest indication to suggest the emperor was an active participant in the communication of his image in this particular area.

### 2.1 A Young Theodosius II and Imperial Ceremonial

From the tender age of nine months, Theodosius II was reportedly involved in his first imperial ceremonial. In January 402, only four days before his elevation to Augustus, the baby Theodosius II was carried in a procession throughout the city in celebration of his baptism.<sup>283</sup> Told in Mark the Deacon’s *Life of Porphyry*, the story goes that after his baptism and procession back to the palace some petitioners, in collusion with his mother Eudoxia, approached Theodosius II to have their previously denied request heard.<sup>284</sup> Upon hearing their request, the courtier carrying the infant prince was seen to nod the baby’s head in acceptance of what the petitioners asked. Arcadius, unable to deny the public endorsement made by his young son and heir, nor ignore the delight of the watching populace, rescinded his earlier

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<sup>283</sup> Kelly 2013a: 3; McLynn 2004: 267.

<sup>284</sup> For discussion on the works authenticity, see Barnes 1989; Cameron et al. 1993: 55; Liebeschuetz 1990: 199-200; McEvoy forthcoming 2019a; Van Nuffelen 2012: 191 n.35. However, for the purpose of this thesis, its authenticity is not a matter of concern. Rather, this account clearly highlighted that even from his infancy; Theodosius II was involved in imperial ceremonial.

refusal and granted their request.<sup>285</sup> Though as Van Nuffelen has recently noted, this event shows the unpredictability of these occasions, it also serves to highlight the important role imperial ceremonies would play throughout Theodosius II's reign, and pre-empt his active participation in these moments.<sup>286</sup>

Following Mark the Deacon's account, we do not hear much of the young emperor's involvement in these events until he reached adulthood.<sup>287</sup> However, due to the ongoing public presence of Arcadius in imperial ceremonial throughout his thirteen-year reign we might assume that Theodosius II was present at major events, such as imperial deaths, birthdays and anniversaries, consular celebrations, the sisters' vow, Pulcheria's elevation to Augusta, military victories and *adventus* into the city.<sup>288</sup> Due to the youth of the emperor, we must also assume that his behaviour and performance during these appearances continued along a traditionally accepted format. However, from the early 420s on, there is a shift in the literary record in the portrayal of Theodosius II's actions in imperial ceremonies. In these accounts, four detailed episodes survive that recount his performances during ceremonies staged at the Hippodrome and in public processions. It will be shown how this emperor, who was more at home in the religious life at Constantinople than any of his predecessors, almost seamlessly incorporated his pious imagery into secular events.<sup>289</sup> Therefore, as these events are taken from his adult years, the following examination will argue that it is likely Theodosius II was an active participant in the public performance of his imperial image and contributed to its promulgation throughout the city.

### 3.1 The Hippodrome

This first section addresses Theodosius II's interaction with the populace in the Hippodrome of Constantinople. Public arenas, such as the Hippodrome, were one of the primary means of establishing and maintaining a connection between the emperor and his subjects, with a long

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<sup>285</sup> Mark the Deacon, *V. Porph.* 47-48; Kelly 2013a: 3-4; McEvoy forthcoming 2019a; Van Nuffelen 2012: 191-192.

<sup>286</sup> Van Nuffelen 2012: 192 followed by Kelly 2013a: 4.

<sup>287</sup> The notable outlier to this is *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 416, where the anonymous author mentioned that the fifteen-year-old emperor entered the city after his visit to Heracleia.

<sup>288</sup> Croke 2010: 254 (Theodosius I); McEvoy forthcoming 2019a (Arcadius). *Marcel. com.* s.a. 411.1; *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 415 mention imperial anniversaries. *Marcel. com.* s.a. 411.2-3, 412.1; *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 415, 416 all mention Western military victories, which McCormick 1986: 58-59 has argued would have been celebrated in the East. Between 402 and 420 Theodosius II would also hold the consulate on nine separate occasions: CLRE 403, 407, 409, 411, 412, 415, 416, 418, 420. *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 416 (see above).

<sup>289</sup> McLynn 2004: 267.

history dating back to the Republic.<sup>290</sup> As such, what was considered acceptable and unacceptable public behaviour for an emperor attending these events was well established prior to the fifth century.<sup>291</sup> Therefore, throughout the following examination of Theodosius II's interaction with his people in the Hippodrome, I will highlight how this emperor combined this traditional expectation with the presentation of the Eastern Theodosian family.

### *Example One*

Of the two examples (both from Socrates) relating imperial interaction that took place in the Hippodrome of Constantinople, one survives in a larger passage dedicated to lauding Theodosius II's virtues as a ruler. Though we do not have a definite date for the event mentioned, this passage is the earliest reference in all surviving literature of the emperor interacting directly with the populace of his city in this arena.<sup>292</sup> On this interaction, Socrates states:

In a certain year, during which the weather had been very tempestuous, he [Theodosius II] was obliged by the eagerness of the people to exhibit the usual sports in the Hippodrome; and when the circus was filled with spectators, the violence of the storm increased, and there was a heavy fall of snow. Then the emperor made it very evident how his mind was affected by God; for he caused the herald to make a proclamation to the people to this effect: 'it is far better and fitter to desist from the show, and unite in common prayer to God, that we may be preserved unhurt from the impending storm.' Scarcely had the herald executed his commission, when all the people, with the greatest joy, began with one accord to offer supplication and sing praises to God, so that the whole city became one vast congregation; and the emperor himself in unofficial garments, went into the midst of the multitude and commenced the hymns. Nor was he disappointed in his expectation, for the atmosphere began to resume its wonted serenity: and Divine benevolence bestowed on all an abundant harvest, instead of an expected deficiency of corn.<sup>293</sup>

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<sup>290</sup> For example, Cic. *Att.* 9.19.3; Livy *Epit.* 34.44; Suet. *Aug.* 45.1; Flower 2014: 381, 393, 396; Hawkins 2017: 139.

<sup>291</sup> These include funding these games and enjoying them alongside their people, interacting with the spectators and responding favourably to their chants. For examples of these expectations see: Suet. *Tib.* 47.1; *Ner.* 39.1-2; Joseph. *AJ* 19.1.4; Plut. *Vit. Galb.* 17.4; M. Aur. *Med.* 6.46; Dio Cass. 69.16.3, 72.29; SHA *Marc.* 15.1. Cameron 1976: 165-166; Hawkins 2017: 141-12; Millar 1977: 369-371; Veyne 1976: 400-401; Yavetz 1969: 105-115.

<sup>292</sup> According to its chronological position in the history.

<sup>293</sup> Soc. 7.22.15-19. Δυσχειμέρου δέ ποτε γενομένου τοῦ ἔτους τὰ συνήθη καὶ ὠρισμένα τῶν ἐν τῷ ἵπποδρόμῳ θεαμάτων διὰ τὸν δῆμον ταῦτα ἐπιζητοῦντα ἀναγκαίως ἐπετέλει. Ὡς δὲ πεπληρωμένου ἀνδρῶν τοῦ ἵπποδρόμου ἐπέτεινεν ὁ χειμὼν πολλοῦ νυφετοῦ καταρραγέντος, τότε δὴ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ γνώμην ὁ βασιλεὺς, οἷαν εἶχεν περὶ τὸ θεῖον, δῆλῃν καθίστησιν, τῷ δῆμῳ προσφωνήσας διὰ τῶν κηρύκων· «Ἀλλὰ πολλῶ κρεῖσσον, ἔφη, καταφρονήσαντας τῆς θεᾶς κοινῇ πάντας λιτανεῦσαι Θεόν, ὅπως ἀβλαβεῖς τοῦ ἐπικειμένου χειμῶνος φυλαχθῆμεν. » Καὶ οὕτω πᾶν εἶρητο τὸ ἔπος, καὶ σὺν χαρᾷ μεγίστη ἐν τῷ ἵπποδρόμῳ λιτανεύοντες ὕμνους ἐκ συμφωνίας πάντες ἀνέπεμπον τῷ Θεῷ καὶ ὅλη μὲν ἡ πόλις μία ἐκκλησία ἐγένετο, βασιλεὺς δὲ μέσος ἐξήρχετο τῶν ὕμνων ἐν ιδιωτικῷ σχήματι πορευόμενος. Καὶ τῆς ἐλπίδος οὐχ ἤμαρτεν· ὁ αἶψα γὰρ εἰς τὸ εὐδινὸν μετεβάλετο, καὶ ἐκ σιτοδείας ἡ τοῦ Θεοῦ φιλανθρωπία εὐετηρίαν παρεῖχε τοῖς σύμπασι.

It is first important to note the traditional elements evident throughout this passage. Since this event survived in a chapter devoted to lauding the virtues of Theodosius II it would appear that the emperor fulfilled two traditional requirements of a Roman ruler – to ensure the people were provided with games and shows, and to attend them on a regular basis.<sup>294</sup> Secondly, emperors were frequently connected with good and bad harvests, tempestuous weather, famine, and natural disasters.<sup>295</sup> In the example above, Socrates described that the pious display from Theodosius II was rewarded with an abundant harvest for the people. Socrates' inclusion of this detail had numerous purposes: it reflected positively on Theodosius II's actions in the account; it showed the emperor providing for his people, not only in public spectacles but also through nourishment; and the connection between the emperor and God. Though the presentation of a divine link was not unique to Theodosius II's reign, the emperor's personal role in leading his people in prayer, which ultimately diverted the storm and produced an abundant crop, was a key development in this perception.<sup>296</sup>

Socrates' association between the emperor's piety and divine favour closely aligned with the public presentation of the Eastern Theodosian family examined in Chapter One. Therefore, its incorporation into this event suggests that in addition to the traditional elements in this passage, the emperor's reported actions were adapted to promote the established image of the family. Socrates tells us that when the storm intensified, Theodosius II acted immediately and had the herald make an announcement to the spectators: 'it is far better and fitter to desist from the show, and unite in common prayer to God, that we may be preserved unhurt from the impending storm.'<sup>297</sup> Here, Socrates portrayed Theodosius II as a quick-thinking emperor who had the ability to utilise an otherwise difficult or frightening event to his advantage. Therefore, in encouraging the people to abandon the games for more pious activities Theodosius II, through his herald, actively reinforced his public image by connecting his piety to their safety.

This was not the only time during this account where the emperor publicly demonstrated components of his imperial image. Socrates states that after seeing the people come together

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<sup>294</sup> Earlier in this passage, Socrates placed Theodosius II at the amphitheatre with the people. Soc. 7.22.12.

<sup>295</sup> Veyne 1990: 305.

<sup>296</sup> Divine link: Amb. *de ob. Theod.* 5-15, 55; Oros. 7.36.5. For discussion of this image, see Grigg 1977: 469; Liebeschuetz 1990: 121; MacCormack 1981: 145-150; McEvoy 2010: 165-166; McEvoy 2013: 144-147, 156-157.

<sup>297</sup> Soc. 7.22.16. «Ἀλλὰ πολλῶ κρείσσον, ἔφη, καταφρονήσαντας τῆς θεᾶς κοινῇ πάντας λιτανεῦσαι Θεόν, ὅπως ἀβλαβεῖς τοῦ ἐπικειμένου χειμῶνος φυλαχθῆιμεν. »

into one congregation the emperor joined them without his official imperial regalia. Van Nuffelen has recently shown the power of these acts of humility by arguing that this purely Christian virtue ‘made [the emperor] equal to his subjects in their shared human frailty.’ He further stated that when portrayed in public ceremonies these acts ‘re-established a sense of community’ between ruler and ruled.<sup>298</sup> This essence of community is highlighted in Socrates’ passage when he later attributed the actions of Theodosius II to the resulting uniformity of the entire city. Moreover, Kelly argued that the public portrayal of humility, similar to *civilitas*, ‘might underline the power of a monarch, rather than indicate an absence of authority.’<sup>299</sup> However, unlike *civilitas*, which focused on highlighting the virtues of a citizen to other citizens, humility was the ostentatious display of public piety.<sup>300</sup> Therefore, it was necessary for a Christian emperor to display his humility to the populace as it allowed them an opportunity to publicly submit themselves to God and, at the same time, portray their supreme level of devotion. Through this, the emperor was able to re-assert his image of power to the populace: in removing his official garments and presenting himself as a private individual on his own volition, Socrates highlighted the power of Theodosius II through his ability to reject that power.

However, this was not the first, nor last, time a Theodosian emperor or empress, would publicly act out this important virtue. In fact, Theodosius II’s predecessors, Theodosius I, Arcadius and Eudoxia, were all famed for their successful performances of imperial humility. In 391, after greeting the remains of John the Baptist at the Chalcedonian jetty, Theodosius I wrapped the saint’s head in his imperial purple cloak.<sup>301</sup> He then accompanied the remains on their seven-mile journey through the city and deposited them at a church in the Hebdomon.<sup>302</sup> Arcadius and Eudoxia further extended this act of humility a decade later. Once again, during a relic translation sometime between 400 and 402, the then bishop of Constantinople, John Chrysostom, remarked on the actions of the empress during her nine-mile procession through the city. He described that she was ‘like a maidservant,’ always one-step behind the holy relics

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<sup>298</sup> Van Nuffelen 2012: 188.

<sup>299</sup> For quote Kelly 2013b: 227. See Kelly 2013a: 52; Rohrbacher 2002: 166-167 for further examples of imperial humility.

<sup>300</sup> Kelly 2013b: 228. See Plin. *Pan.* 22-23 for a perfect example of an emperor portraying *civilitas*. For more on this virtue see Wallace-Hadrill 1982.

<sup>301</sup> Soz. 7.21.4-5; *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 391.

<sup>302</sup> Soz. 7.21.5; Malmberg 2014: 169.

but continually touching them.<sup>303</sup> He then commented that she removed her images of imperium, and decided to don ‘the stole of humility’ rather than ‘the stole of purple.’<sup>304</sup> In a later sermon, the same bishop proclaimed that after Eudoxia’s act Arcadius too ‘laid down his diadem’ and visited the relics with the ‘appearance of status...absent.’<sup>305</sup> This display of humility by the imperial couple, Arcadius and Eudoxia, shows a clear progression from Theodosius I’s earlier performance.

Although Theodosius II’s display of humility in the Hippodrome was built on a dynastic precedent, he altered the context of its performance as these earlier examples were acted out during a religious procession. Therefore, by performing these acts within this context, all three Augusti/Augusta were able to promote their piety at a time when this virtue was already clearly highlighted. Theodosius II, however, displayed imperial humility within a secular context – during the races at the Hippodrome. Through his ingenuity, the emperor was able to extend his piety into secular events of Constantinopolitan life. Moreover, as his behaviour closely aligned with the public presentation of the Eastern imperial family particularly illustrated through epigraphic and numismatic evidence, as well as the writings of the ecclesiastical historians, it is perhaps possible to conclude that Socrates’ account provides the earliest evidence to suggest Theodosius II actively partook in the public dissemination of this image. That this is not the only time where the emperor displayed his humility seemingly unprompted suggests not only a degree of agency on the emperor’s part, but also indicates its success in promoting his image. The success of this event in particular is clearly highlighted through the people’s reaction to the emperor’s performance.

Socrates stated that the herald had barely finished his announcement when the people came together and began to sing praises and offer supplication to God, so that the ‘whole city became one vast congregation.’<sup>306</sup> Theodosius II, on seeing this, removed his imperial garments, went into the midst of the multitude, and commenced the hymns. The author’s description of the populace, as a unified congregation, requires further note. For this event, I would suggest that those present did not leave the Hippodrome, nor follow the emperor on procession to the Great

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<sup>303</sup> Joh. Chrys. *Hom.* 2 in PG 63.468.9 in Mayer et al. 2000: 87.

<sup>304</sup> Joh. Chrys. *Hom.* 2 in PG 63.468.17 in Mayer et al. 2000: 87.

<sup>305</sup> Joh. Chrys. *Homilia quod frequenter Conveniendum est* in PG 63.473 in Van Nuffelen 2012: 197.

<sup>306</sup> Soc. 7.22.17. ...καὶ ὅλη μὲν ἡ πόλις μία ἐκκλησία ἐγένετο.

Church.<sup>307</sup> Rather, Socrates' words imply that the Hippodrome became the church and all those present – the whole city – became the congregation. However, we should not conclude that Socrates wished to portray the emperor as a bishop, but rather to show his power as their emperor, as it was through his actions that the people reacted and came together to worship God.<sup>308</sup> By presenting the people in this way, Socrates showed the ability of Theodosius II to unite and connect his citizenry. In doing this, Socrates placed the emperor as the central figure, surrounded by his supportive populace. The significance of this imagery is two-fold. Firstly, it connects the key concepts of unity and piety in the imperial image with the actions of the emperor, as it was through his performance that the people were 'unite[d] in common prayer to God.'<sup>309</sup> Secondly, the description of the emperor surrounded by his people provides the first indication of Theodosius II's role in redefining active rulership towards Constantinople and its people.

Lastly, there is one final innovation embedded within this passage – Theodosius II's role as hymn-singer. A forthcoming work from Meaghan McEvoy on imperial hymn-singing has highlighted Theodosius II's role in this innovation as she noted that this account was the first time within the surviving literature where an emperor is leading and conducting the hymn.<sup>310</sup> She has suggested that this act may have originated during the reign of Arcadius, though conceding the absence of definitive evidence to prove this. Therefore, I would suggest that if hymn-singing did originate with his father, it would have been conducted within a religious context and not a secular one as above. Either way, this act of Theodosius II shows a level of innovation, whether he or his father first implemented it. By incorporating religious elements into this imperial ceremonial, Theodosius II was able to re-assert the piety of his reign, connect himself to his people and to act out an important Christian imperial virtue.

Throughout this passage, Theodosius II was portrayed as a humble, pious, and popular emperor. He followed traditional imperial norms by providing games for the city populace and attending them. We have seen through this passage the power of imperial humility and Theodosius II's innovation in incorporating religious elements into secular ceremonial. If this event can be dated to the early 420's, as it is chronologically positioned within the text, then

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<sup>307</sup> Cf. example two below where Socrates explicitly mentioned a procession to the Church.

<sup>308</sup> Urbainczyk 1997a: 144-145; Van Nuffelen 2012: 190.

<sup>309</sup> Soc. 7.22.16. ...κοινῇ πάντας λιτανεῦσαι Θεόν...

<sup>310</sup> McEvoy, forthcoming 'The Act of Imperial Hymn-Singing in Late Antiquity.'

this is the first example of a now adult Theodosius II in the Hippodrome interacting with the populace. We can therefore suggest that it is likely Theodosius II was personally involved in the actions presented throughout this passage. More than this, we can see his own ingenuity in identifying an opportunity that could be utilised for his own gain and in successfully acting out his role. As such, this passage persuasively suggests that Theodosius II was actively involved in the promotion of his image and held a greater agency in its performance.

### *Example Two*

The second passage in which Theodosius II interacted with the populace in the Hippodrome can be definitively dated to 425. After the death of the Western emperor Honorius and the rise of the usurper John, Theodosius II sent Eastern troops west to install his cousin and Caesar, Valentinian III, onto the throne – an event discussed at length in Chapter Three. News of Eastern victory and John’s capture reached Constantinople thus:

This event afforded that most devout emperor [Theodosius II] an opportunity of giving a fresh demonstration on his piety towards God. For the news of the usurper’s being destroyed, having arrived while he was engaged at the exhibition of the sports of the Hippodrome, he immediately said to the people: ‘come now, if you please, let us leave these diversions, and proceed to the church to offer thanksgivings to God, whose hand has overthrown the usurper.’ Thus did he address them; and the spectacles were immediately forsaken and neglected, the people all passing out of the circus singing praises together with him, as with one heart and one voice. And arriving at the church, the whole city again became one congregation; and once in the church they passed the remainder of the day in these devotional exercises.<sup>311</sup>

Socrates’ presentation of this event is unique as it is a story of a spontaneous victory celebration – a ceremonial event that was rarely unplanned.<sup>312</sup> For the first twelve years of Theodosius II’s reign, the Eastern Empire celebrated perhaps four Western victory celebrations in Constantinople.<sup>313</sup> That these earlier ceremonies were organised and usually carefully staged

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<sup>311</sup> Soc. 7.23.11-12. Τότε δὴ ὁ εὐσεβέστατος βασιλεὺς ἦν εἶχε περὶ τὸ θεῖον εὐλάβειαν ἐπεδείξατο. Ἱπποδρομίας γὰρ ἐπιτελοῦντι ἐμνήσθη ἀνηρῆσθαι ὁ τύραννος. Προσφωνεῖ οὖν τῷ δήμῳ· «Δεῦρο μᾶλλον, εἰ δοκεῖ, ἔφη, παρέντες τὴν τέρψιν ἐπὶ τὸν εὐκτήριον οἶκον γενόμενοι εὐχαριστηρίους εὐχὰς τῷ Θεῷ ἀναπέμψωμεν ἀνθ’ ὧν ἡ αὐτοῦ χεὶρ καθεῖλεν τὸν τύραννον.» Ταῦτα εἶρητο, καὶ τὰ μὲν τῆς θέας πέπαυτό τε καὶ ἡμέλητο, διὰ μέσου δὲ τοῦ ἵπποδρόμου πάντες συμφώνως ἅμα αὐτῷ εὐχαριστηρίως ψάλλοντες ἐπὶ τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐπορεύοντο, καὶ ὅλη μὲν ἡ πόλις μία ἐκκλησία ἐγένετο, ἐν δὲ τῷ εὐκτηρίῳ τόπῳ γενόμενοι ἐκεῖ διημέρευον.

<sup>312</sup> Berger 2001: 77; Cameron 1976: 231.

<sup>313</sup> Soz. 9.15.3, Olymp. Frag. 17.2.63-64 (in Blockley 1983), Oros. 7.42.3, Hydatius (42[50]), Marcel. *com.* s.a. 411.2 (Constantine); Soz. 9.15.3, Olymp. Frag. 20.1 (in Blockley 1983), Hydatius (46[54]), Theoph. AM 5904 (Jovinus and Sebastian); Olymp. Frag. 14.20-23 (in Blockley 1983), Oros. 7.42.9, Marcel. *com.* s.a. 412.2, *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 416 (Priscus Attalus); Olymp. Frag. 26 (in Blockley 1983), *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 415 (Ataulph). McCormick 1986: 56-58.



is suggested in an entry from the *Chronicon Paschale*. This entry states that after the Western victory over the Visigoth king, Ataulph was announced in Constantinople in 415, ‘the lamps were lit, and on the following day chariot racing was held, so that a processional entry was also made.’<sup>314</sup> Therefore, this celebration, which presumably followed traditional norms, was held the day after news reached the city so that the proper ceremonial could be organised. Conversely, the victory celebrations in 425 was not postponed but began immediately after Theodosius II received the news. Therefore, I would argue that the reason for this different form of celebration was the emperor himself. For example, the earlier triumphal entry in 415 occurred whilst Theodosius II was still young and, as a result, continued the traditions of his predecessors. Comparatively, in 425 the now adult emperor could take a leading role in his public presentation and, thus, Theodosius II, or his government, saw the advantage in such a victory ceremony in which the emperor could actively take part.

Theodosius II’s reported actions during this celebration in 425 provides us with a persuasive indication of his contribution to the development of triumphal ceremonies for a non-campaigning emperor. Therefore, to highlight this contribution, we must first briefly consider two earlier portrayals of emperors celebrating a military victory. The first is Ammianus Marcellinus’ famous account of Constantius II’s triumphal entry into Rome after his defeat of the usurper, Magnentius, in 357.<sup>315</sup> On his description of Constantius II’s behaviour, Ammianus Marcellinus stated that he ‘sat alone upon a golden car in the resplendent blaze of shimmering precious stones...he never stirred, but showed himself as calm and imperturbable.’<sup>316</sup> After crossing through the city gates, his behaviour did not change as he ‘kept his gaze straight ahead, and turned to face neither to the right nor left...[he did not] nod when the wheel jolted nor was he ever seen to spit, or to wipe or rub his face or nose, or move his hands about.’<sup>317</sup> Though Ammianus Marcellinus described Constantius II as a solitary figure, elevated above the rest, he also mentioned those who marched alongside him: ‘two lines

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<sup>314</sup> *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 415. Καὶ αὐτῷ τῷ ἔτει μηνὶ γορπιαίῳ τῇ πρὸ η΄ καλανδῶν ὀκτωβρίων ἡμέρα παρασκευῇ ἐδηλώθη ἀνηρῆσθαι Ἀταούλφον βάρβαρον ἐν τοῖς ἄνω μέρεσιν ὑπὸ τοῦ δεσπότης Ὀνωρίου. καὶ γενομένης λυχναΐας τῇ ἐξῆς ἵππικὸν ἤχθη, ὥς καὶ πομπὴν εἰσελθεῖν.

<sup>315</sup> Flower 2015; Matthews 2007: 231-235.

<sup>316</sup> Amm. Marc. 16.10.6, 16.10.9. ...*insidebat aureo solus ipse carpento, fulgenti calristudine lapidum variorum...talem se tamque immobilem...ostendens*. MacCormack 1972: 736-737; MacCormack 1981: 42, 44. See also Flower 2015: 824-825.

<sup>317</sup> Amm. Marc. 16.10.10. ...*rectam aciem luminum tendens, nec dextra vultum nec laeva flectebat...nec cum rota concuteret nutans, nec spuens, aut os aut nasum terfens vel fricans, manumve agitans visus est unquam*. Flower 2015: 829; Matthews 2007: 514.

of infantrymen with shields and crests [marched on either side of Constantius II]...and scattered among them were the full-armoured cavalry.’<sup>318</sup> Therefore, the two key themes in Ammianus Marcellinus’ description of Constantius II’s triumph was his almost statuesque behaviour coupled with the heavy military imagery associated with this event.

Similar imagery was presented in Pacatus’ *Panegyric to Theodosius* when he described the emperor’s triumphal entry into Rome after the defeat of Magnus Maximus in 389. Though not as detailed as the former account, the grandeur of Theodosius I’s event and the militaristic imagery associated with this celebration are shown. At one point in this panegyric, Pacatus described the gems, silks and triumphal animals made to pull the emperor’s chariots that were brought to the city for this celebration.<sup>319</sup> Therefore, the extravagance traditionally associated with these ceremonies remained throughout the later fourth century.<sup>320</sup> Moreover, the military might of this emperor was emphasised a number of times including a mention of his father, the once powerful general. Pacatus stated that ‘you were the son of a triumphant general...the commander of the Roman army...[and] the champion of liberty.’<sup>321</sup> Therefore, the militaristic imagery of Theodosius I’s public portrayal in Rome whilst celebrating his triumph over the usurper continued Constantius II’s earlier description.<sup>322</sup>

As Constantius II and Theodosius I fought with their armies on campaign, this heavy military connection during victory ceremonies closely coincided with their public image as campaigning emperors and their recent military victories over Magnentius and Magnus Maximus respectively.<sup>323</sup> However, for Theodosius II the same connection could not be made. Therefore, Socrates’ passage described the ingenuity of the emperor in adapting a traditional imperial ceremony to better suit his situation in Constantinople and to highlight his relationship with its populace. This connection is clearly shown through the army’s complete omission from the event. Though military support was an integral component in Theodosius II’s position, and the emperor publicly connected with them at different times, Socrates’ passage indicates the growing importance of his relationship with the people. Another way of adapting

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<sup>318</sup> Amm. Marc. 16.10.8. *et incedebat hinc inde ordo geminus armatorum, clipeatus atque cristatus, corusco lumine radians, nitidis loriceis indutus, sparsique cataphracti equites...* Flower 2015: 832; Matthews 2007: 234; McCormick 1986: 86-87.

<sup>319</sup> Pac. *Pan. Theod.* 22.5.

<sup>320</sup> Pac. *Pan. Theod.* 21.1-4; 37.1-4. Croke 2010: 255; Matthews 2007: 234; McCormick 1986: 87.

<sup>321</sup> Pac. *Pan. Theod.* 31.1. *...te esse triumphalis uiri filium...Romani exercitus ducem, libertatis patronum...*

<sup>322</sup> That Constantius II and Theodosius I’s entry followed a traditional form see McCormick 1986: 84-91.

<sup>323</sup> For more see Humphries 2014: 158-161.

the traditions associated with this event was by presenting it as a spontaneous occurrence. Through this act, some of the ceremonial trappings associated with this event could be removed, allowing the emperor an opportunity to integrate closely with his people. This closeness is suggested firstly through the emperor's vocal interaction with the people, an act that extended his own earlier behaviour, and then through the portrayal of citywide unity as the people, together with the emperor, left the Hippodrome.

It was not unprecedented for this regime to withhold information from the people until a more beneficial time presented itself, and I would suggest this was likely to have occurred on this particular occasion.<sup>324</sup> By withholding this information, the regime ensured that the eventual announcement would be made in the most advantageous location. Considering the emphasis already placed on the emperor's relationship with the populace discussed above, I would argue that the most advantageous setting for this announcement would be at the Hippodrome. By staging this event here, the emperor had tens of thousands of spectators already gathered – a feat that would have been impossible in places such as an imperial forum.<sup>325</sup> However, I would suggest there was more to it than only this. By staging the event at the Hippodrome, rather than a forum associated with other emperors, Theodosius II was able to assert his own authority over the event. Moreover, the Hebdomon was an unsuitable candidate as well due to its overt association with the army. As the connection between the Constantinopolitan populace and the emperor was the most important aspect of this event, its inception at a region outside the city would contradict this overall aim. Therefore, I would suggest that by staging this event at the Hippodrome, Theodosius II was able to promote his public image to the people and, at the same time, connect himself to them. Lastly, Socrates stated that Theodosius II led the spectators from the Hippodrome and together they arrived at the Great Church of the city. I would therefore suggest that the triumphal entry into the city was replaced with the emperor's entry into the Church and thus further reinforcing the connection between the emperor's piety and the Empire's security.

Theodosius II's actions not only connected him to his people, but also provided him another opportunity emphasise his piety. When one considers the opening sentence of this passage, the

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<sup>324</sup> Soc. 7.23.1. Socrates reported that after hearing the news of his uncle's death, Theodosius II withheld the knowledge and even misled the people with differing reports.

<sup>325</sup> Hippodrome could approximately hold 100,000 people. Cameron 1976: 236 followed by Safran 1992: 413. Cf. Meijer 2010: 6; Mitchell 2007: 313 who argued that the maximum capacity was 80,000.

capture of John ‘afforded that most devout emperor an opportunity of giving a fresh demonstration on his piety towards God,’ this conclusion is quite plausible.<sup>326</sup> Moreover, the action of leading the people to the Church was not the only appearance in this passage of the Eastern Theodosian public image. Socrates also reported that the emperor suggested to the people, ‘let us leave these diversions, and proceed to the church to offer thanksgivings to God, whose hand has overthrown the usurper.’<sup>327</sup> These words echo the Hebdomon inscription discussed in Chapter One where the security of the state was linked to the piety of the emperor’s sisters. Therefore, Theodosius II’s reported behaviour shows not only the consistency of this presentation, but also the emperor’s active involvement in its dissemination.

There are two noticeable similarities between the two accounts discussed thus far: the description of the whole city becoming one congregation, and Theodosius II partaking in the signing of hymns and praises. I do not believe that the former statement implied the approximate 400,000 residents of the city came together at the Great Church.<sup>328</sup> Rather, I would argue that Socrates utilised a general phrase that incorporated important constituencies – the people, court and, when they reached the church, the clergy. Though these constituencies would have been present during a traditional victory ceremonial, by grouping them together Socrates connected them to the central figure – Theodosius II. This connection is further reinforced by the emperor’s reported actions of joining the congregation in singing hymns and praises: ‘the people...singing praises together with [Theodosius II], as with one heart and one voice.’<sup>329</sup> Just as in the earlier passage, his portrayal here should not be interpreted as the actions of a bishop but done to show his power as their emperor. As such, these two events highlight the consistency of Theodosius II’s public portrayal during ceremonies and the ongoing contribution in establishing this new form of active rule in Constantinople.

Through the brief discussion of Constantius II and Theodosius I’s portrayals during their victory ceremonies, one can see that Theodosius II’s behaviour was unprecedented. The numerous adaptations implemented during the victory celebration of 425 further supports the suggestion that this emperor was personally involved in his public presentation during his adult

<sup>326</sup> Soc. 7.23.11. Τότε δὴ ὁ εὐσεβέστατος βασιλεὺς ἦν εἶχε περὶ τὸ θεῖον εὐλάβειαν ἐπεδείξατο. For piety connecting the emperor to the people of his city, see Rapp 2009: 81-82.

<sup>327</sup> Soc. 7.23.11. ...παρέντες τὴν τέρψιν ἐπὶ τὸν εὐκτήριον οἶκον γενόμενοι εὐχαριστηρίους εὐχὰς τῷ Θεῷ ἀναπέμψωμεν ἀνθ’ ὧν ἡ αὐτοῦ χεὶρ καθεῖλεν τὸν τύραννον.

<sup>328</sup> This number is provided by Mango 1985: 51 followed by Bassett 2004: 79; Lee 2013b: 76.

<sup>329</sup> Soc. 7.23.12. διὰ μέσου δὲ τοῦ ἵπποδρόμου πάντες συμφώνως ἅμα αὐτῷ εὐχαριστηρίως ψάλλοντες ἐπὶ τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐπορεύοντο...

years. As such, a spontaneous victory ceremonial, which originated in the Hippodrome, allowed Theodosius II to remove some of the ceremonial pomp and pageantry associated with this event so that he could personally and closely interact with his populace. In doing so, he clearly highlighted his important relationship with the city and its populace. Additionally, Theodosius II's actions here reinforced the public image of the Eastern Theodosian family. By entering into the church triumphantly, rather than the city, Theodosius II strengthened the imperially promoted connection between the emperor's piety and the Empire's security. Therefore, just as the Hebdomon inscription proclaimed that the piety of the sisters ensured the emperor was always victorious, Socrates' passage highlighted Theodosius II's active involvement in publicising this image.

Theodosius II's close relationship with the populace of Constantinople and his visibility in Constantinople are two recurring themes in Socrates' passages. Though his reported behaviour in these examples contains some traditional elements – providing and attending games, interacting with the audience and ensuring the city had ample food – there are numerous examples that described the emperor's ingenuity. These include the blending of religious ceremonial into secular events to reinforce his public image, his ability to unify the people and remain the central figure, and his capability to adapt an ancient ceremony to better suit his needs. Moreover, it is important to restate here that the emergence of these modified ceremonies coincided with Theodosius II's growth to adulthood. Therefore, though speculative, I would suggest that these developments were not a mere coincidence, but evidence supporting the argument that the Eastern emperor was actively involved in his public presentation.

#### 4.1 Processions

Thus far, I have examined two examples relating to Theodosius II's performance during ceremonies held in the Hippodrome and have shown how they reinforced his public image and connected him to the Constantinopolitan populace. However, it was not only at the Hippodrome where Theodosius II reportedly manipulated the structure of ceremonial events in an effort to promote his image and re-assert his position. Therefore, two further positive examples involving the emperor in public ceremonies will be analysed in this final section. These examples include the translation of the bones of John Chrysostom in 438 and the piety walk of the emperor in 447. Once again, key themes in Theodosius II's behaviour will be highlighted throughout this analysis to show the ongoing and long-term consistency in the

emperor's portrayal during public ceremonies. Therefore, as both events can be definitively dated to the last twelve years of Theodosius II's reign, these examples provide further insights into his contribution to the development of imperial ceremonial throughout this period and his continuous role in his public presentation. To conclude this section, the less positive interaction between Theodosius II and the populace will be addressed. The inclusion of this event, which records the stoning of the emperor whilst inspecting the public granaries in 431, will show the difficulties in maintaining public support for an emperor living and ruling from one city.

### *Example Three*

We saw earlier in the brief examples on the humility portrayed by Theodosius I, Arcadius and Eudoxia that by the late fourth century imperial presence at relic processions had increased in Constantinople.<sup>330</sup> Their presence and involvement during these events was a further attempt to promote their piety to the Constantinopolitan populace, assert their central role during these processions, and to connect the court, clergy and populace together. However, these two earlier examples also indicated that during relic translations especially, the Augusti/Augusta had to compete for attention. Van Nuffelen has shown that during ecclesiastical processions the emperor or empress was continually in competition with the bishop of Constantinople and would go, at times, to great lengths to ensure their presence was the central focus.<sup>331</sup> Though I agree with Van Nuffelen, I would extend his conclusions further and suggest that in the context of a relic translation the emperor is not only competing with the bishop of the city, but also the relics themselves. This competition between the emperor and relics is clearly shown during the translation of the body of John Chrysostom in 438.

There are numerous accounts detailing the reinterment of John Chrysostom into Constantinople. However, for the purpose of this thesis, only Theodoret and Theophanes' versions will be analysed as they offer a detailed description of Theodosius II's behaviour during this event.<sup>332</sup> Theodoret, writing in the final decade of Theodosius II's reign, neither lived in Constantinople nor purportedly witnessed John Chrysostom's reinterment. However, his account should be taken as a plausible report of the emperor's behaviour on this occasion. As his portrayal of the emperor closely correlates with Socrates' earlier episodes, we can

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<sup>330</sup> No doubt linked to the long-term residency of these emperors. See Croke 2010: 255-257; Kelly 2013a: 42-44; McEvoy forthcoming 2019a.

<sup>331</sup> Van Nuffelen 2012: 185, 191.

<sup>332</sup> Soc. 7.45 focused on the role of Proclus instead of Theodosius II. For a plausible explanation as to why this author decided to focus on the Constantinopolitan bishop, see Urbainczyk 1997: 129-132.

suggest a high level of authenticity in his description of the emperor and the actions he took to maintain his primary position. Theodoret states:

At a later time the actual remains of the great teacher were conveyed to the imperial city, and once again the faithful crowd turning the sea as it were into land by their close packed boats, covered the mouth of the Bosphorus towards the Propontis with their torches. The precious possession was brought into Constantinople by the present emperor [Theodosius II], who received the name of his grandfather and preserved his piety undefiled. After first gazing upon the bier he laid his head against it, and prayed for his parents and for pardon on them who had ignorantly sinned...<sup>333</sup>

The opening sentence of this passage clearly indicates not only the large quantity of people who had gathered in and around the harbour, but also why they had gathered – to see the return of John Chrysostom. The analysis of the earlier two examples showed how Theodosius II's involvement in ceremonies communicated his virtues and connected him to the people. Moreover, through this discussion we saw the ingenuity of this emperor in quickly reacting to unscripted and unpredictable situations. Therefore, I propose that after witnessing this massive crowd and their reaction to the return of John Chrysostom, Theodosius II performed an act that no other member of this procession could conduct nor stop him from performing to ensure his involvement would be remembered. Therefore, by laying his head against the bier, which held the relics, Theodosius II re-asserted himself as the central figure in this event.

This act was another public performance of imperial humility made by Theodosius II, which was furthered through the prayer that sought forgiveness for his parents who had ‘ignorantly sinned.’<sup>334</sup> This dual act was a different presentation of the emperor's humility shown in example one and from his predecessors, where in each case imperial regalia was removed. Therefore, by portraying his humility through different forms, this event further indicates that Theodosius II continually reinvented traditional imperial presentation throughout his reign. Moreover, this suggests he did not always follow an established script, but at times acted on his own ingenuity. In publicly submitting to the bones of John Chrysostom and seeking forgiveness for his parents, Theodosius II ensured he remained the central figure and was not

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<sup>333</sup> Theod. HE 5.36. Χρόνῳ μέντοι ὕστερον καὶ αὐτὰ τοῦ διδασκάλου τὰ λείψανα εἰς τὴν βασιλεύουσαν μετεκόμισαν πόλιν. καὶ πάλιν ὁ πιστὸς ὄμιλος, ὡς ἡπεύρω τῷ πελάγει διὰ τῶν πορθμείων χρησάμενος, τοῦ Βοσπόρου τὸ πρὸς τῇ Προποντίδι στόμα ταῖς λαμπάσι κατέκρυψε. Τοῦτον δὲ ἐκείνη τῇ πόλει τὸν θησαυρὸν ὁ νῦν βασιλεύων προσήνεγκεν, ὁ τοῦ πάππου καὶ τὴν προσηγορίαν λαχὼν καὶ τὴν εὐσέβειαν φυλάξας ἀκήρατον. οὗτος ἐπιθεὶς τῇ λάρνακι καὶ τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς καὶ τὸ μέτωπον ἱκετείαν ὑπὲρ τῶν γεγεννηκότων προσήνεγκε, συγγνώμην τοῖς ἐξ ἀγνοίας ἡδικηκόσιν ἀντιβολήσας.

<sup>334</sup> Theod. HE 5.36. ...ἀγνοίας ἡδικηκόσιν...

overshadowed by the popular bishop's return. Furthermore, his presence at this event allowed another opportunity to promote the image of unity. John's reinterment and the public declaration of his parents' guilt were the final steps in the reunification of the city clergy and the 'Johnnites' who had, since the bishop's second exile in 404, worshipped separately.<sup>335</sup> Thus, through Theodoret's account we can see Theodosius II capitalising on the wrongs of his parents to ensure he received the credit of reunification. This is further evident not only towards his humble actions towards the relics but is also shown earlier in the passage when Theodoret related that the relics were brought back to the city by the emperor. Through this, Theodosius II was given agency, and therefore the credit, for John's reinterment and the subsequent uniformity in the church.

Though Theodoret's account showed the competition between the emperor and the relics during these events, a much later retelling described the emperor's role during the procession itself. Theophanes states:

In this year (437/8), Proclus, the most holy bishop of Constantinople, after seeking permission from the emperor Theodosius, transferred the relics of John Chrysostom from Comana to the capital. The following year, after 33 years, he took them on a public procession escorted by the emperor and the blessed Pulcheria, and placed them in the church of the Apostles, thus uniting those who had been separated following his deposition from the Church.<sup>336</sup>

This account, derived originally from Socrates, indicates that Theodosius II and Pulcheria led the procession of John Chrysostom's body through the city.<sup>337</sup> Similar to Theodoret's account above, it was Theodosius II, through his actions, who was the central figure in this procession – indicated through Proclus' secondary portrayal. Therefore, even with the omission of his behaviour when greeting the relics at the port, Theophanes described the emperor as the primary focus in the event. Moreover, the last line of this passage strengthens the earlier conclusion of the emperor receiving the credit for the reunification of the church. The author stated that by placing Chrysostom's remains in the Church of the Apostles, the emperor united

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<sup>335</sup> For the earlier steps, see Marcel. *com.* s.a. 428.2.

<sup>336</sup> Theoph. AM 5930. Τούτῳ τῷ ἔτει Πρόκλος, ὁ ἀγιώτατος ἐπίσκοπος Κωνσταντινουπόλεως, αἰτήσας τὸν βασιλέα Θεοδοσίον τὸ λείψανον Ἰωάννου τοῦ Χρυσοστόμου ἀπὸ Κομάνων εἰς τὴν βασιλεύουσαν μετεκόμισεν. καὶ τῷ ἐχομένῳ ἔτει διὰ λγ' ἐτῶν τοῦτο δημοσίᾳ ἐπὶ προελεύσεως πομπεύσας σὺν τῷ βασιλεῖ καὶ τῇ μακαρίᾳ Πουλχερίᾳ εἰς τὴν τῶν ἀποστόλων ἀπέθετο ἐκκλησίαν, καὶ οὕτω τοὺς διὰ τὴν ἐκείνου καθαίρεσιν τῆς ἐκκλησίας χωρισθέντας ἥνωσεν.

<sup>337</sup> Socrates' account of this event did not mention Theodosius II or Pulcheria during the procession. Therefore, this addition in Theophanes' account must come from another intermediary source or through his own interpretation of their public relationship. That the emperor was extremely likely to have been present at this event is evident through the more common mention of imperial attendance at these processions as well as Theodoret's account, which attested the emperor's presence. See Soc. 7.45.



those ‘who had been separated.’ In comparing the reported actions of Theodosius II in these accounts, a consistent image emerges – the emperor modified his public behaviour during this ceremonial to ensure that he not only remained the central figure in the event, but also controlled its primary message. This is further extended when one considers the consistent connection between Theodosius II’s actions and city unity shown in Socrates, Theodoret and Theophanes’ accounts.

Pulcheria’s presence during the procession in Theophanes’ account, the only reported time she was specifically included in this event, requires further discussion. We know from past examples that Theodosian Augustae were involved in relic processions throughout the city.<sup>338</sup> As the reinterment of John Chrysostom and the rehabilitation of his image was a crucial public event for the imperial family, we might expect Eudocia to be mentioned alongside her fellow family members. However, as this was the year in which she undertook her first pilgrimage to the Holy Land, it is quite possible the Augusta had already left the city. Therefore, Pulcheria may have accompanied her brother during the procession as she was fulfilling the role of Theodosius II’s female counterpart whilst his wife was away. However, I believe for this translation more can be said. It is quite possible that Pulcheria’s presence in this procession was linked to the family history on which Theodosius II was hoping to capitalise. If this is the case, it is also possible that Theodosius II’s two other sisters, Arcadia and Marina, were also involved in the procession, so that collectively they could convey the message that the current ruling family supported the exiled bishop and his loyal supporters. As this is admittedly speculative, Pulcheria’s presence alone reinforced the image of unity – both of the church and of the presented imperial couple.

Though almost four hundred years separates these two accounts, this example has highlighted the consistent portrayal of the emperor’s behaviour throughout these centuries. They show that Theodosius II understood the power in ceremonial displays of humility and the importance of maintaining his central role during these processions. Moreover, it has also highlighted that the emperor continued to maintain a constant imperial presence in ecclesiastical events, suggesting it was not a coincidence that increased imperial involvement in ecclesiastical matters occurred when the public image of the reigning family was deeply rooted in

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<sup>338</sup> See Eudoxia mentioned above, Pulcheria and Eudocia mentioned in Chapter One.

ostentatious displays of piety.<sup>339</sup> The unprompted nature of Theodosius II's actions during this event further indicates his active participation in the dissemination of his image. When one compares his reported behaviour to Arcadius' during the relic translation sometime between 400 and 402, when the emperor was said to have left his guards and regalia behind to visit the relics, Theodosius II's ingenuity is clearly highlighted. Eudoxia reportedly prompted Arcadius in his display of imperial humility, whereas Theodosius II, after seeing the reaction of the gathering audience, seems to have acted on his own accord.<sup>340</sup> Moreover, we can see through this episode that there were different ways for the emperor to express his humility. Therefore, rather than copying the acts of his mother and father, or even replicating the events undertaken in the Hippodrome, Theodosius II chose to lay his head on the bishop's coffin. This once again shows the progression of ceremonial acts throughout his reign and displays once more the emperor reinventing traditional elements of imperial ceremonial.

#### *Example Four*

The earlier three examples have shown how Theodosius II successfully interacted with the populace and highlighted moments when he either created or adapted ceremonial events to his advantage. As such, this discussion has argued that ceremonial was not static, but changed according to the decisions and actions of the emperor. Moreover, these examples have importantly emphasised the extent of Theodosius II's personal interventions and shown how he altered traditional presentation to align with the Eastern Theodosian image. The fourth example continues to highlight this trend. This event, which occurred in the closing years of the emperor's reign, is perhaps the most significant in the ostentatious display of imperial humility and ingenuity of the emperor. Though it does not survive in any contemporary account, the consistent portrayal of the emperor's actions by three separate authors, all of which differ from those discussed above, highlights the long-term positive reception of Theodosius II's image. According to John Malalas:

During [Theodosius II's] reign Constantinople suffered from the wrath of God for the first time. The earthquake occurred on the night of 26<sup>th</sup> January, from the colonnades known as Troadic to the bronze *tetrapylon*. The emperor went barefoot in a procession of prayer with the senate, the people and the clergy for many days.<sup>341</sup>

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<sup>339</sup> McLynn 2004: 267.

<sup>340</sup> Prompting: Joh. Chrys. *Hom.* 2 in PG 63.472.20-21 in Mayer et al. 2000: 91. Kelly 2013b: 224; Van Nuffelen 2012: 197.

<sup>341</sup> Joh. Mal. 14.22. 'Επὶ δὲ τῆς αὐτοῦ βασιλείας ἔπαθεν ὑπὸ θεομηνίας πρῶτοις Κωνσταντινούπολις ὑπὸ σεισμοῦ μηνὶ αὐδυναίῳ τῷ καὶ ἰανουαρίῳ κς' ἐν νυκτὶ ἀπὸ τῶν λεγομένων Τρωαδισίων ἐμβόλων ἕως τοῦ Χαλκοῦ

The emperor's ability to manipulate an event for his political gain is once again highlighted in Malalas' account. Similar to those examples above, this event showed Theodosius II's creativity during a time of crisis, the successfulness in his display of imperial humility and his ability to maintain the central position during these elaborate processions. In doing this, the emperor ensured that the important constituencies in the city, the senate, people, and clergy, were not only brought together, but also connected to him. Though this has been a common thread connecting all four examples, the piety walk was the first time in which these three constituencies were explicitly mentioned together by our main source. Though I have suggested that these groups were no doubt present and involved in the earlier ceremonials examined, that they were explicitly mentioned and connected to the acts of Theodosius II on this occasion suggests that this event was quite exceptional. Contrary to Malalas' statement, this was not the first time an earthquake struck the imperial city during Theodosius II's reign, though it was the first reported example where this emperor was publicly involved in a penitence procession.<sup>342</sup> Therefore, there were a number of key reasons that could have prompted such an extreme display by Theodosius II during the 447 earthquake: (i) the association between natural disasters, emperors and divine wrath, or θεομηνία; (ii) another opportunity to turn a frightening event into a display of imperial piety; and (iii) the looming military threat to the north.<sup>343</sup>

As examined in example one, the emperor was closely associated with good and bad weather including natural disasters and was often held responsible for their occurrence. In the first example, Socrates stated that his pious actions resulted in an abundant harvest, when the opposite was expected, and averted the potentially dangerous storm. That another show of piety by Theodosius II was conducted under similar circumstances towards the end of his reign indicates not only the consistency in his public behaviour, but also his ability to utilise another frightening event to promote his imperial image. Moreover, there was a long tradition of associating natural disasters such as earthquakes with the displeasure of God.<sup>344</sup> By the fifth century, the belief that earthquakes occurred through the will of God as a way of showing divine displeasure had firmly cemented itself in ecclesiastical writings.

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Τετραπύλου. ὅστις βασιλεὺς ἐλιτάνευσεν μετὰ τῆς συγκλήτου καὶ τοῦ ὄχλου καὶ τοῦ κλήρου ἀνυπόδητος ἐπὶ ἡμέρας πολλάς.

<sup>342</sup> Earlier earthquake: Theoph. AM 5930. Croke 1981: 126-131.

<sup>343</sup> Kelly 2013b: 223.

<sup>344</sup> For examples on the causes of earthquakes throughout antiquity, see: Arist. *Mete.* 2.7-8, Sen. *Q Nat.* 6.20.7-6.24.6; Amm. Marc. 17.7.9-14; Lib. *Or.* 1.134; Philostr. *VA* 6.38; Soz. 6.2.13-16. Croke 1981: 122.

Philostorgius, for example, claimed that God caused earthquakes ‘for the purpose of converting sinners and bringing them to repentance.’<sup>345</sup> Through this statement, it is clear that earthquakes were interpreted as divine dissatisfaction that were only rectified through pious activities. Moreover, the word *θεομηνία*, meaning specifically ‘wrath of God’, first appeared in Sozomen’s history.<sup>346</sup> Its regular use in Byzantine chronicles and histories from the later fifth and sixth centuries onwards further suggests the benefits to be gained through the overt display of penitence by Theodosius II. However, as I stated earlier, this was not the first time an earthquake struck the imperial city, though it was the first instance where this emperor publicly participated in these repentant activities. For example, another earthquake is attested to have hit the capital sometime in 438 and the patriarch, Proclus, was said to have led the people to the Hebdomon, offering their prayers to God.<sup>347</sup> Therefore, Theodosius II’s ostentatious display of piety and humility after the earthquake in 447 suggests there was a wider political aim for his actions.

The connection between the piety of the imperial family and the Empire’s security has been a recurring theme throughout this thesis. Therefore, as the 440s was a time when the Eastern Empire was engaged in numerous battles, I would suggest that Theodosius II’s performance in 447 was an attempt to reaffirm this association.<sup>348</sup> It is attested in numerous sources that the relationship between the Eastern Empire and the Hunnic tribes to the north had soured in 446, resulting in several incursions into Roman territory and the destruction of numerous towns and forts along the Danube.<sup>349</sup> The threat of the Huns attacking Constantinople at this time was quite legitimate – the earthquake had compromised not only the Theodosian Walls to the west of the city, but also the sea walls to the north.<sup>350</sup> Therefore, that Theodosius II’s performance of piety coincided with a major military threat highlights the consistency of his public image throughout his reign and the continual re-assertion on the emperor’s behalf to connect his piety with the Empire’s security. Another common theme addressed throughout this thesis is the adaptation of traditional imperial presentation. An earlier earthquake in Constantinople

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<sup>345</sup> Philostor. *HE* 12.10.

<sup>346</sup> Soz. 2.4.4. Croke 1981: 123.

<sup>347</sup> Pope Felix III *ep.* 3 in PL 58.909-910 in Croke 1981: 127; Theoph. AM 5930.

<sup>348</sup> Eastern involvement in battles: Marcel. *com.* s.a. 439.3, 441.1, 3, 442; *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 442. Kelly 2008: 91, 127-128.

<sup>349</sup> Prisc. Frag. 9.1 (in Blockley 1983); Marcel. *com.* s.a. 447.2; Croke 1981: 138; Kelly 2008: 119-133, 308-311; Kelly 2013b: 223; Zuckerman 1994: 167-168, 180.

<sup>350</sup> Nestorius *Bazaar* 364; Marcel. *com.* 447.1; Croke 1981: 135-136; Kelly 2008: 130-131.

recorded in Orosius' *History Against the Pagans* suggests Theodosius II's actions in 447 were once again building on a tradition initiated by Arcadius. Orosius stated that after an earthquake shook Constantinople in 396, the emperor prayed in unison with the people for their deliverance.<sup>351</sup> However, Theodosius II's long barefoot walk detailed in this event had no antecedent, which indicates it was incorporated on the initiative of the emperor. That it was extremely successful in promoting his position is evident through not only a further three years of stable rule, but also its appearance in later chronicles.

Two further accounts of the earthquake and the emperor's response, which survive in the *Chronicon Paschale* and the Chronicle of John of Nikiu, will be discussed briefly below. By mentioning these two accounts, it will be shown that their similar portrayal of Theodosius II indicates the long-term positive reception of this emperor, his actions and public image. On the emperor's actions, the *Chronicon Paschale* states:

Constantinople suffered from an earthquake...for some time, so that no one dared to remain at home but all fled outside the city [to the Hebdomon], chanting litanies day and night. And the emperor chanted litanies together with the senate and the multitude and the clergy, barefoot for many days.<sup>352</sup>

Theodosius II's actions in this account are similar to Malalas' above – the barefoot emperor walked together with the senate, people and clergy for many days and nights. However, the *Chronicon Paschale* built on Malalas' account by stating that the people left their homes and fled outside the city. Though Theodosius II was with the people when they left the city, it is also important to note who, probably, met the populace when they finally arrived at the Hebdomon. By 447, Pulcheria, who was not removed from the public presentation of the imperial family despite her retirement, had lived at the Hebdomon palace for close to eight years. Since her long-term virginity and ostentatious piety, which was celebrated visually on the victory column positioned in this outer suburb, was connected to the stability and longevity of Theodosius II's reign, reinforces the earlier conclusion that the emperor adapted his actions to better promote his public image. Therefore, this connection of imperial piety and the Empire's security must have been further emphasised by the likely meeting of the procession, and of her brother, by Pulcheria when they arrived at the Hebdomon. Furthermore, the *Chronicon Paschale* also noted that Theodosius II chanted litanies alongside his people. This

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<sup>351</sup> Oros. 3.3.2.

<sup>352</sup> *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 450. Τούτῳ τῷ ἔτει ἔπαθε Κωνσταντινούπολις ἀπὸ σεισμοῦ... ἐπὶ χρόνον, ὥστε μὴ τολμᾶν ἐν οἴκῳ τινὰ μένειν, ἀλλ' ἔφυγον ἔξω τῆς πόλεως πάντες λιτανεύοντες ἡμέρας καὶ νυκτός. καὶ ὁ βασιλεὺς ἐλιτάνευσε μετὰ τῆς συγκλήτου καὶ τοῦ ὄχλου καὶ τοῦ κλήρου ἀνυπόδετος ἡμέρας πολλάς.

act connects this seventh century account to Socrates' two examples mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, and highlights the consistency in Theodosius II's behaviour in publicly chanting litanies from the beginning of his adult reign until its end.

The final mention of this event that will be mentioned here survived in John of Nikiu's *Chronicle*, compiled over two hundred years after Theodosius II's reign. He states:

There was likewise a great earthquake in the imperial city. And the emperor was profoundly grieved – he and all the senators and priests and people together, and for many days they walked with bare feet.<sup>353</sup>

Once again, we have this repetition of the emperor together with the people, senate and clergy, embarking on a barefoot procession through the city. However, John of Nikiu extended the rhetoric of unity between the emperor and these constituencies by stating that not only were they all profoundly grieved, but also that they walked with bare feet together. This addition can be linked back to the contemporary portrayal of Theodosius II in Socrates' history. In his two examples above, the ecclesiastical author described how the people positively reacted to the actions of the emperor, suggesting a connection between Theodosius II and his citizenry. John of Nikiu's retelling strongly supports this conclusion as the author described how the emperor's display of piety influenced the people to replicate his actions. Therefore, John of Nikiu's account reinforces the image of the city becoming one congregation through the actions of the emperor.

This event survived in many Byzantine chronicles faithfully as it was re-enacted annually for many centuries after Theodosius II's reign. The *Chronicon Paschale* states:

...the remembrance of the litany is celebrated annually even to the present day in the Campus, because of the forbearance of the beneficent God. For amidst such great wrath no-one was killed.<sup>354</sup>

Its re-enactment continued for a further three centuries after the compilation of the *Chronicon Paschale* as the procession was included in the *Typicon of Hagia Sophia*, a tenth century liturgical calendar.<sup>355</sup> That it was remembered and performed annually for at least five centuries indicates firstly the power of imperial repentance and humility, and secondly its ability to unite important constituencies in the city and connect them to the emperor. That it

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<sup>353</sup> Joh. Nik. 84.39.

<sup>354</sup> *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 450. ὅθεν καὶ ἡ μνήμη κατ' ἔτος ἐπιτελεῖται τῆς λιτανείας μέχρι καὶ νῦν ἐν τῷ Κάμπῳ ὑπὲρ τῆς τοῦ φιλανθρώπου θεοῦ μακροθυμίας. ἐν γὰρ τοσαύτῃ ὀργῇ οὐδεὶς ἐθανατώθη.

<sup>355</sup> *Typicon of Hagia Sophia*: Janvier 26; Kelly 2013b: 239.

was initially enacted by Theodosius II clearly suggests his ability to manipulate ceremonial events to better suit his contemporary needs. Moreover, its long-term success in promoting Theodosius II's public image is evident through his consistent portrayal in later literary sources. As this is the only example thus far examined that did not have a surviving contemporary account, this consistency is important in considering the later reception of his public presentation.

### *Less Positive Interaction*

All these above examples show successful ceremonial events involving Theodosius II and his close and connected relationship with the populace. However, there is one final example that highlights not only the unpredictability of imperial ceremonial, but also of the people. Marcellinus *comes*, our only sources on this event, states that in 431:

...while the emperor Theodosius was in procession to the public granaries, he was pelted with stones by a hungry populace because of the severe grain shortage among the people.<sup>356</sup>

This entry highlights that despite the numerous occasions where the emperor was reported to have successfully performed and gained the public's approval during ceremonies, the populace could be easily dissatisfied with their ruler.<sup>357</sup> As Van Nuffelen has recently noted, imperial involvement in ceremonies did not guarantee the support of the city for a sedentary ruler. Rather, he stated that those who lived and ruled from one city faced their own set of difficulties and risks. The most important risk relating to this example was that Theodosius II had to win back acceptance from the same audience who pelted him with stones.<sup>358</sup>

There are several reasons to suggest Theodosius II successfully regained the support of his people. The first is the date of this incident, which Marcellinus *comes* placed to sometime in 431, halfway through the emperor's long reign. Therefore, the emperor ruled for a further nineteen years, which included at least two recorded examples of successful performances and public approval during ceremonies. Moreover, that this is the only incident where Theodosius II himself was reportedly harmed throughout his forty-two-year reign is another indication of his capability as ruler. The four previous examples have shown that he was a visible entity in

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<sup>356</sup> Marcel. *com.* s.a. 431.3. *Hoc tempore dum ad horrea publica Theodosius processum celebrat, tritici in plebem ingruente penuria imperator ab esuriante populo lapidibus inpetitur.*

<sup>357</sup> For more examples see: Theoph. AM 5895; Joh. Mal. 13.49 (Honorius and the people of Rome); Theoph. AM 6093 (Maurice being pelted with stones). Cameron 1970: 384; Kelly 2013b: 240-241; McEvoy forthcoming 2019a.

<sup>358</sup> Van Nuffelen 2012: 186.

Constantinople throughout this long period. Considering this overwhelming positive tradition in the sources, it would appear that the majority of Theodosius II's public interactions with the people of his city were favourable. Therefore, though Marcellinus *comes*' report is the outlier in this tradition, and does not represent Theodosius II's overall relationship with the people of his city, this entry is still an important indication of the difficulties of maintaining public favour for a sedentary emperor.

### 5.1 Conclusion

These examples have shown that Theodosius II actively contributed to the development of imperial ceremonial in Constantinople and was a public figure for the majority of his adult reign. Though these ceremonies occurred at different stages in Theodosius II's adult life, there were common themes present in the four positive examples that show a consistent portrayal in the emperor's public behaviour. The ostentatious display of Theodosius II's piety continually emerged throughout these examples. Though expected during the reinterment of John Chrysostom in 438 and the piety walk in 447, the overt pious display at the Hippodrome was, perhaps, unexpected. Therefore, examples one and two have shown Theodosius II's ability to stage two different ceremonies within a secular setting that highlighted his piety. In both these examples, and the piety walk in 447, the emperor's behaviour was connected to the security of the Empire and the safety of his people. That this presentation closely aligned with the public image of the imperial family discussed in Chapter One suggests Theodosius II adapted traditional components of imperial ceremonial to highlight important aspects of his image. Moreover, that it continued throughout the emperor's adult years suggests he was personally involved in the dissemination of his image within Constantinople.

Theodosius II's central role as a unifying figure within the city was another theme that connected these positive examples. Socrates described the city as 'one vast congregation' in both of his accounts, Theophanes related that the reunification of the Church was brought about through the reinterment of John Chrysostom, and the senate, clergy and people joined the emperor in his piety walk. Therefore, as it was the actions of the emperor that initiated this unity highlights his central role in each event. His reported act of hymn\*singing with his people further suggests the unity of the people and their connectedness to the emperor. That his public act of signing, the earliest in recorded history, occurred both at the beginning of his adult reign in the early 420 and was mentioned again in 447 suggests a continuation in his public behaviour.



The final theme evident throughout the above examples was Theodosius II's repeated portrayal of imperial humility. Whether it was during the interrupted games at the Hippodrome, during the reinterment of John Chrysostom, or the piety walk, the emperor's display of this imperial virtue was expertly performed. Moreover, not one example of the emperor's humility was portrayed in a similar fashion: he removed his imperial regalia, placed his head on the bier and prayed for his parents' forgiveness, and walked barefoot. This ongoing development suggests that Theodosius II altered his performance to highlight specific aspects of his image and maintain his central position. Therefore, the analysis of these four positive examples indicates that rather than repeatedly performing the same act of humility, the emperor progressively developed this presentation. Most importantly, these interconnected examples highlight the consistent portrayal of Theodosius II in literary sources that range from the contemporary Socrates to Theophanes in the ninth century. This discussion also included a negative example of Theodosius II's interaction with the people. However, it was shown that, as it was the only hostile example from this reign indicates it was not representative of the emperor's long-term relationship with the people of Constantinople. However, this example was examined as it clearly showed the difficulties faced by sedentary emperors, who communicated their virtues through imperial ceremonies, in maintaining populace support.

Overall, this chapter has shown how Theodosius II actively manipulated the traditional script of imperial ceremonies to better suit his contemporary needs. Though this was presented through his differing portrayals of humility, it was the adapted victory ceremony at the Hippodrome that most clearly highlighted this progression. By transferring the locus of this event from the Hebdomon to Hippodrome, the emperor was able to reinforce his relationship with the people and the city. Therefore, this chapter provides the most persuasive evidence to suggest that the actions of Theodosius II contributed to a new form of rulership in the area of imperial ceremonial and interaction with his subjects, which was based primarily in Constantinople and around its people.

## Theodosius II and the West

### 1.1 Introduction

For the majority of the later fourth century, the Roman Empire was divided into different regions and ruled by a college of emperors. Despite this geographical division, the rhetoric of unity continued to disseminate from the central regimes of each ruling emperor, with laws issued under their collective authority, and their image disseminated together.<sup>359</sup> After the death of Theodosius I in 395, and the full accession of his sons Arcadius and Honorius to emperors of the Eastern and Western Empires respectively, the division of the Roman world into ‘twin Empires’ was complete.<sup>360</sup> Though the relationship between these two brothers was at times strained, reportedly due to the actions of their advisors and not the emperors themselves, this image of unity continued.<sup>361</sup> Laws were issued under their joint authority, monuments erected in both their names and military victories were celebrated in both halves of the Empire.<sup>362</sup> The concept of twin Empires continued into the fifth century and, as recent studies have shown, the image of unity and imperial co-operation continued and, at times, intensified.<sup>363</sup> This chapter examines the relationship between these twin Empires during the reign of Theodosius II, focusing primarily on the Eastern emperor’s portrayal in Eastern sources during his shared rule with Western colleague, Valentinian III.

This chapter will first briefly comment on the public relationship between the Eastern and Western Empires during the joint rule of Arcadius and Honorius (395-408), then Theodosius II and Honorius (408-423). Through this analysis, this section will outline the foundation of the relationship between the Eastern and Western courts. Then, through three case studies, this chapter will analyse key moments in which Theodosius II was involved with Honorius’ successor, Valentinian III. Case study one examines the events leading up to and immediately following the Eastern military expedition to install Valentinian III onto the Western throne

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<sup>359</sup> Laws: CTh 10.10.9 (Valentinian I and Valens), 6.22.4 (Valentinian I, Valens and Gratian), 16.2.23 (Valens, Gratian, Valentinian II), 6.28.1 (Gratian, Valentinian II and Theodosius I), 2.4.4 (Valentinian II, Theodosius I and Arcadius), 16.8.8 (Theodosius I, Arcadius and Honorius), 16.2.29 (Arcadius and Honorius). Statues: LSA 1294 (Gratian, Valentinian II and Theodosius I), 350-352 (Gratian, Valentinian II and Theodosius I), 1275 (Valentinian II and Theodosius I). Davenport 2014: 60; McCormick 1986: 111-119.

<sup>360</sup> Millar 2006: 3.

<sup>361</sup> Zos. 5.11.1; Soz. 8.25 (against Western courtiers); Claud. *Ruf.* 2.50-53, 161-170, *Eutr.* 1.484-489 (against Easter courtiers). Cameron 1970: 84-90, 124-126; Kelly 2012: 243-244; Matthews 1975: 270-272; McEvoy 2013: 155-159.

<sup>362</sup> Rhetoric: Claud. *Gild.* 1.4-5. Laws: CTh 9.6.3, 13.1.16. Consulship: CLRE 396, 402; Coinage: RIC X Arcadius 3; RIC X Honorius 1207. Monuments: CIL 6.1188-1190 (LSA 13061308), 1192 (LSA 1309), 40797 (LSA 1564), 40798 (LSA 784). Davenport 2014: 61; McCormick 1986: 47-56, 117; McEvoy 2013: 158.

<sup>363</sup> McEvoy 2014; Millar 2006: 3-7.

between 423 and 425. This investigation will analyse the presentation of Theodosius II as a guiding figure over his young cousin through the progressive elevation of Valentinian III to Augustus – proclaimed *nobilissimus* in 423, Caesar in 424 and Augustus in 425. Multiple imperial ceremonies celebrated in the West – such as the victory ceremony over John in the Hippodrome at Aquileia, Valentinian III's full accession to Augustus at Rome, and the elevation of Honoria, the Western emperor's elder sister, to Augusta soon after – will also be considered to show numerous Eastern components in the presentation of the Western imperial family. Therefore, this case study will highlight the strong Eastern influence on the early years of Valentinian III's reign and will detail the initial portrayal of Theodosius II as the guardian and protector of the West.

Case study two investigates the adaptation of this image that coincided with Valentinian III's growth into adulthood and the establishment of numerous Western courtiers into positions of power. Therefore, this case study deals primarily with the marriage of Theodosius II's only surviving child, Licinia Eudoxia, to the Western emperor in 437. Through the analysis of both numismatic and literary evidence, this example will show how Theodosius II's public image over Valentinian III transformed from guardian to father. Moreover, through the evidence examined, it will highlight not only the image of unity – within both the imperial families and between the two Empires – but also Theodosius II's likely role in influencing the promotion of this ideology. Though unity between the twin Empires was not an innovation of the Eastern Theodosian regime during the reign of Theodosius II, this case study will outline the overt emphasis placed on this perception through the marriage of Licinia Eudoxia and Valentinian III.

The final case study examines how this adapted image of unity between the two Empires was circulated throughout the Roman world through the promulgation of the Theodosian Code. It will begin with an analysis of the Edict of 429, presented to the Senate at Constantinople, which announced the beginning of codification efforts, and its companion edict in 435. Through the examination of these edicts, this case study will show the presentation of Eastern dominance and the pre-eminent position of Theodosius II that disseminated from the central regime in Constantinople. Finally, the speech made by the Western official, Anicius Acilius Glabrio Faustus, to the Roman Senate in 438 will be studied to explore Theodosius II's presentation outside of Constantinople and the East. Overall, this investigation will show how the legal codification project and its promulgation soon after the imperial wedding firmly displayed the

East's dominance over the West, and was a successful action made by the Eastern regime to promote Theodosius II's authority over his Western colleague.

As there is an abundant amount of contemporary Eastern material relating to this topic, within each section the contemporary numismatic material will be first analysed followed by an examination of literary sources, primarily the writings of Olympiodorus, Socrates, Sozomen, and the Theodosian Code. By examining the numismatic material first, this chapter will show how the Eastern Theodosian regime wanted to portray Theodosius II's relationship with the West. Then, by comparing this portrayal with literary descriptions, this chapter will determine how the contemporary authors interpreted the presentation of the Eastern emperor.

## 2.1 East/West Relations, 395-423

After the death of Theodosius I in 395, his two sons, eighteen-year-old Arcadius and eleven-year-old Honorius, ruled the Roman world together for thirteen years.<sup>364</sup> Considering the age of the two brothers, it is interesting to note that there is no evidence to suggest that the adult Arcadius or his Eastern regime tried to assert a guardian role over the child-emperor Honorius.<sup>365</sup> As we will see in the forthcoming examination, this lack of action is significant as it was a completely different policy adopted by the regime during the reign of Theodosius II and the young Western emperor, Valentinian III. Moreover, though the image of imperial unity and co-operation continued to be perpetuated during the joint reign of the brothers, through the issuing of laws and the construction of monuments in both halves of the Empire, at numerous times throughout this period, relations between the two Empires soured.<sup>366</sup> It was during these periods where the government of the twin Empires adopted a policy of 'hostile indifference.'<sup>367</sup> However, the situation changed after Arcadius's death and the full accession of the child Theodosius II in 408. For the next fifteen years, until Honorius' death in 423, the relationship between the Eastern and Western Empires appeared to stabilise with the perception of imperial co-operation evident in numerous forms of central media.<sup>368</sup>

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<sup>364</sup> Arcadius death: Soc. 6.23.7; Marcel. *com.* s.a. 408.3; *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 408.

<sup>365</sup> Equal portrayal on coinage: RIC X Arcadius 3; RIC X Honorius 1207.

<sup>366</sup> Bad relations seen through the West not recognising Eastern consulships. Claud. *Eutr.* 1.317-319, 484-489; CLRE 399, 400, 404. For discussion, see Bury 1923: 134; Cameron et al. 1993: 161-175; Kelly 2012: 244; Liebeschuetz 1990: 253-272; McEvoy 2013: 159 n.31, 171-172.

<sup>367</sup> Gillett 1993: 18.

<sup>368</sup> With the exception of the soured relationship after the elevation of Constantius III to Augustus in 421. However, after his death only seven months later, relations improved. See McEvoy 2013: 213-215.

Before a brief discussion of this relationship takes place, it is first necessary to mention the lack of literary evidence pre-dating 424, as our main sources for this period are the fragments of Olympiodorus of Thebes and those Eastern writers who utilised him.<sup>369</sup> As such, from the outset of this joint reign there is an undercurrent of what Van Nuffelen has termed, ‘Eastern triumphalism’ within the surviving literature.<sup>370</sup> Moreover, as Olympiodorus was an Eastern courtier and even dedicated his history to Theodosius II, his portrayal of Eastern triumphalism reflected the presentation of the emperor after the events beginning in 424. Due to this perception, the following sections will first analyse the numismatic evidence to determine the contemporary presentation of Theodosius II between 408 and 423, and then compare this image to his later literary depiction.

The Eastern numismatic material, relatively dated between 408 and 423, provides an interesting presentation of the relationship between Honorius and Theodosius II. Two coins, surviving from the mint in Constantinople, were produced perhaps simultaneously and disseminated together. The first, figure one, depicts the bust of a cuirassed Theodosius II, facing right, wearing his pearl-diadem, a star in the left field and the legend D N THEODO. The reverse of this coin depicts two emperors of equal height, standing, facing each other, holding a spear in their outer hand and a globe between them with their inner hands. The legend on the reverse reads, GLORI-A ROMA-NORVM.



Figure One: Bronze AE3 of Theodosius II.



Figure Two: Bronze AE3 of Honorius.

The second coin, figure two, is the exact replica of Theodosius II's coin except with the obverse legend indicating that the emperor shown is Honorius. Though it was common for the central regime to disseminate similar coins of their Augusti to promote the image of imperial unity, the portrayal of the two emperors on the reverse of these coins is worthy of further mention.

<sup>369</sup> Gillett 1993: 2, 9 for a publication date of 440 or soon after. Cf. Matthews 1970: 80; Van Nuffelen 2013: 130 who argued the work was completed soon after 425. Sozomen and Zosimus are the primary ancient works who utilised Olympiodorus, see Matthews 1970: 81.

<sup>370</sup> Van Nuffelen 2013: 135. Also, see Gillett 1993.

Out of all the coin types produced from the Constantinopolitan mint after Theodosius II's full accession, none portrayed their child-emperor as a smaller figure to Honorius.<sup>371</sup> As mentioned in Chapter One, this was a clear change from his portrayal between 402 and 408, where the infant Theodosius II was depicted noticeably smaller on coins alongside the two adult emperors, Arcadius and Honorius.<sup>372</sup> Therefore, that the regime immediately altered Theodosius II's appearance on imperial coinage after his full accession to Augustus suggests that they wanted to portray the two emperors equally, despite their emperor's youth and Honorius' seniority.

Curiously, however, there survive two coins depicting Theodosius II and Honorius from the mint in Thessalonica that might suggest for a brief time the provinces expected a portrayal of Western seniority. Figures three and four depict the exact bust of Theodosius II and Honorius respectively as mentioned above, with the legend confirming their identities. The reverse, however, portrays Theodosius II and Honorius slightly different. These coins show two emperors, one slightly smaller, facing each other, holding a spear in their outer hands and shield in their inner.



Figure Three: Bronze AE3 of Theodosius II.



Figure Four: Bronze AE3 of Honorius.

As there is no precedent for this coin type from Constantinople, it is perhaps correct to suggest the Thessalonican mint assumed, due to the youth of Theodosius II, that the regime in the Eastern imperial city would portray the Western emperor as the senior Augustus.<sup>373</sup> However, that it was not continually replicated, and these two mints are the only surviving types, indicates that a smaller Theodosius II was not the perception the regime in Constantinople wanted to present.

Official Eastern coinage suggests that the contemporary portrayal of Theodosius II and Honorius' relationship was intended to convey equality, despite the youth of the Eastern

<sup>371</sup> For example RIC X Theodosius II (East) 409-411.

<sup>372</sup> Shown in Chapter One

<sup>373</sup> See Noreña 2011a: 19; Rowan 2011: 243 for non-official and provincial mints pre-empting the official mints.

emperor. Therefore, I now want to juxtapose this presentation with Theodosius II and Honorius' portrayal in the Eastern literary evidence compiled after 424. Through this short analysis it will become clear that these authors portrayed Theodosius II, even from his youth, as not only the guardian of the West, but also as the only emperor able to protect the Roman Empire as a whole. The first episode relates Honorius' actions after he heard of Arcadius' death. Sozomen states:

...Honorius out of concern for his nephew was eager to visit Constantinople to appoint loyal ministers to ensure the safety of his nephew's person and throne. For Honorius regarded him as a son...<sup>374</sup>

Probably derived from Olympiodorus' history, this account described Honorius' wish to act as a father figure to his young nephew, which was perhaps prompted, McEvoy has suggested, through the circumstances of his own accession.<sup>375</sup> Therefore, as the contemporary numismatic evidence would suggest the East did not want to present Honorius as a guardian figure over Theodosius II, this account indicates a different purpose behind his portrayal of this event. I would suggest that the underlying factor of Sozomen's presentation of Honorius at this time is linked to Theodosius II's future relationship with Valentinian III. Therefore, by expressing that Honorius wanted to journey east to protect his nephew, who he 'regarded as a son,' the author was comparing his failed attempt with Theodosius II's later success.

The literary perception that the Western emperor failed where the Eastern emperor later succeeded is further evidenced during one of the most decisive moments in early fifth century history. After the sack of Rome in 410 and the elevation of yet another Western usurper, Priscus Attalus, in the ancient city, Sozomen states:

The affairs of Honorius were reduced to so critical a condition, that ships were kept in readiness to convey him, if it were necessary, to his nephew, when an army of four thousand men which had started for the west arrived unexpectedly during the night at Ravenna; Honorius caused the walls of the city to be guarded by this reinforcement, for he distrusted the native troops as inclined to treachery.<sup>376</sup>

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<sup>374</sup> Soz. 9.4.5-6. ἐπεὶ δὲ ἐτελεύτησεν Ἀρκάδιος, ὥρμησε μὲν Ὀνώριος φειδοῖ τῇ περὶ τὸν ἀδελφιδοῦν ἐλθεῖν εἰς Κωνσταντινούπολιν καὶ πιστοὺς ἄρχοντας καὶ φύλακας καταστήσαι τῆς αὐτοῦ σωτηρίας καὶ βασιλείας. ἐν τάξει γὰρ υἱὸς αὐτὸν ἔχων ἐδεδίδει μὴ τι πάθοι διὰ τὸ νέον ἔτοιμος ὢν πρὸς ἐπιβουλήν. Olymp. Frag. 5.2.2-5 (in Blockley 1983). Cf. Zos. 5.3.3.

<sup>375</sup> McEvoy 2013: 181.

<sup>376</sup> Soz. 9.8.6-7. εἰς τοῦτο δὲ περιστάντων τῶν πραγμάτων, ὡς εὐτρεπεῖς αὐτὸν ἔχειν ναῦς, ἵν' εἰ δεήσειεν ἀποπλεύσῃ πρὸς τὸν ἀδελφιδοῦν, ἀδοκῆτως ἐν ἑξ ἀριθμοῖς ἀμφὶ τετρακισχίλιοι στρατιῶται νύκτωρ τῇ Ῥαβέννῃ προσέπλευσαν ἐκ τῆς ἀνα τετρακισχίλιοι στρατιῶται νύκτωρ τῇ Ῥαβέννῃ προσέπλευσαν ἐκ τῆς ἀνατολῆς· οἷς τὴν φυλακὴν τῶν τειχῶν ἐπέτρεψε δεδιὼς τῶν ἐπιχωρίων στρατιωτῶν τὸ ἔτοιμον εἰς προδοσίαν. Cf. Soc. 7.10; Zos. 6.8.1-3.

This passage is illuminating for the Eastern portrayal of Theodosius II's involvement in Western affairs during the last decade of his reign. As I stated at the beginning of this section, Sozomen's history, which relied prominently on Olympiodorus, incorporated the portrayal of Eastern triumphalism throughout this account. Therefore, the description of both emperors – Honorius in dire need of saving and Theodosius II as the saviour – was altered to the image of a triumphant East. Moreover, it is also quite probable, given the foreshadowing in the earlier passage that Sozomen wanted to show that Theodosius II's interest in protecting the Western emperor and saving his Empire emerged during his youth.

Through the brief comment on Arcadius' lack of action in establishing a guardian position over his young brother in 395, we can see that there was no established precedent for Theodosius II's actions in relation to his presentation over Valentinian III. Moreover, through the analysis of Theodosius II and Honorius' relationship expressed in numismatic and literary evidence, we can see how the events beginning in 424 affected the perception of this relationship. The numismatic material suggests that the Eastern Theodosian regime hoped to portray the two emperors as equal Augusti through their similar depiction on imperial mints. This image of equality, however, did not translate into the surviving Eastern literary sources. In these accounts, Honorius was presented as the emperor who failed in areas where Theodosius II succeeded – in establishing a public portrayal of guardianship over a young Augustus and protecting Rome and its Empire. Therefore, the following section will analyse the emergence of this image between 423 and 425 when the East embarked on a costly enterprise to install Theodosius II's young cousin, Valentinian III, onto the Western throne.

### 3.1 The Emerging Father

The sudden death of Honorius in August 423, and the resulting military usurpation three months later, called for the Eastern government to act.<sup>377</sup> This action presented an opportunity for Theodosius II and his regime to manipulate and adapt the image of co-operation between the Eastern and Western Empires. In this, the East was able to promote the four-year-old Valentinian III as the legitimate heir to the Western throne and portray Theodosius II as his guiding figure. However, evidence contemporary with the three months between Honorius' death and John's usurpation suggests that this presentation of Theodosius II and Valentinian

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<sup>377</sup> Honorius' death: Soc. 7.22.20; Olymp. Frag. 39.1 (in Blockley 1983); Philostor. *HE* 12.13; Zonar. 8.21.



III was not what was originally intended. During these months, there is no evidence to suggest Theodosius II and the East publicly supported Valentinian III's claim to the Western throne.<sup>378</sup> Conversely, through the laws issued at this time, we can see that the Eastern emperor legislated for the Empire as a whole, which has led some scholars to conclude that he may have wished to rule the entire Empire without a Western colleague.<sup>379</sup>

Despite what might have been Theodosius II and the East's initial intention, by November of 423 a new Western emperor, John, was elevated at Rome. It was, probably, the news of this elevation and the arrival of John's envoys in Constantinople that forced the Eastern regime to adapt their initial presentation of Theodosius II to incorporate his cousin and only other male member of the Theodosian line.<sup>380</sup> This section will chronologically address the events that occurred within the Roman Empire between 423 and 425. It will track the progressive elevation of Valentinian III to Augustus, his presentation alongside his cousin on both Eastern and Western coinage, and their portrayal in the Eastern literary evidence. Therefore, this analysis will highlight the initial establishment of Theodosius II's presentation as a guiding figure over Valentinian III and the protector of the West.

### *Initial Establishment*

Theodosius II's altered presentation and emerging support for Valentinian III first appeared, according to the numismatic evidence, in either late 423 or early 424 when four coins of the same type were minted in Constantinople. The obverses of these coins display the busts of four Eastern legitimised Augustus and Augustae: Theodosius II (figure five), Pulcheria (figure six), Eudocia (figure seven), and Galla Placidia (figure eight). The production and dissemination of these four coins had a two-fold purpose: the public display of imperial unity between these four members of the Theodosian house and Theodosius II's support of Galla Placidia's son, Valentinian III, as a legitimate Western successor. This image of unity is highlighted most clearly in the almost uniform portrayal of the four imperial members. As discussed in Chapter One, the identical depiction of the Eastern Augusti/Augustae on Constantinopolitan coinage greatly influenced their contemporary presentation of a unified force working together to continually assert Theodosius II's position and the Theodosian house

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<sup>378</sup> McEvoy 2013: 228.

<sup>379</sup> CTh. 11.20.5; Hydatius [73(82)]; Gillett 1993: 19; Matthews 1975: 377-381; McEvoy 2013: 228; Millar 2006: 55. For a different opinion on Theodosius II's delay, see Oost 1968: 176-179.

<sup>380</sup> Olymp. Frag. 39.2 (in Blockley 1983); Soc. 7.23; Philostor. HE 12.13; Humphries 2012: 164

more broadly. The addition of Galla Placidia's image into this portrayal in 423/424 reinforced this image of Theodosian unity and confirmed public recognition of Galla Placidia's position – as an Augusta of the Western Roman Empire.



Figure Five: *Solidus* of Theodosius II.



Figure Six: *Solidus* of Aelia Pulcheria.



Figure Seven: *Solidus* of Aelia Eudocia.



Figure Eight: *Solidus* of Galla Placidia.



This contemporary perception of imperial unity and Eastern support correlates with the later literary portrayal of these events. Olympiodorus attested that shortly after Theodosius II's rejection of John's envoys, the Eastern emperor recognised Honorius' elevation of Galla Placidia to Augusta, her husband Constantius III to Augustus and their son Valentinian III to *nobilissimus* in 421.<sup>381</sup> Theodosius II's ratification of these titles suggests that the Eastern government was preparing, or at least seriously considering, placing the young Valentinian III, who had clear imperial pedigree, onto the Western throne.<sup>382</sup> Therefore, it is highly likely that the four coins shown above were minted and disseminated in order to promote Theodosius II's act and assert Galla Placidia and Valentinian III's position to the Constantinopolitan public and the Eastern Empire.

### *First, you must be Caesar*

A coin minted in Constantinople, firmly dated to early 425, was the first imperial coin to portray both Theodosius II and Valentinian III. The coin is important as it highlights, from the outset

<sup>381</sup> Which he had previously ignored. CTh 10.10.29-30; Olymp. Frag. 43.1.2-3 (in Blockley 1983) (Galla Placidia and Valentinian III titles); Marcel. *com. s.a.* 424.1 (Galla Placidia and Valentinian III titles); McEvoy 2013: 229; Wilkes 1972: 389.

<sup>382</sup> McEvoy 2013: 226-227, 229-230.

of Valentinian III's presentation in Constantinople, how the Eastern Theodosian regime wanted to depict the relationship between the two male members of the imperial family. Shown in figure nine, this coin was minted in celebration of the first joint consulship between Theodosius II and Valentinian III in 425.<sup>383</sup> On the obverse the Eastern emperor, in full military garb, is depicted along with the legend D N THEODO-IVS P F AVG. Though Theodosius II's portraiture on the obverse followed traditional imperial presentation, the reverse of this coin highlights its real value in determining the contemporary Eastern portrayal of the relationship between Theodosius II and his cousin. The reverse depicts an enthroned Eastern emperor, wearing his diadem and bejewelled consular robes. To his left is Valentinian III who is not only standing, but also markedly smaller than Theodosius II, without a diadem and dressed in plain robes.<sup>384</sup> Both figures are holding a mappa in their right hand and a cruciform sceptre in their left hand, with a star shown above and between them.



Figure Nine: *Solidus* of Theodosius II.

The lack of jewellery and diadem on Valentinian III can be attributed to his rank of Caesar at the time of this coin's production. Therefore, though the East had publicly supported Valentinian III's claim to the Western throne, they had yet to elevate him to Augustus. His lack of imperial finery and further imperial titles is the first clear indication that the Eastern regime wanted to portray the pre-eminence of their emperor. The second indication of this is the notable height difference between the two figures. Though the ages of Theodosius II and Valentinian III at this time, twenty-three and five respectively, was perhaps a factor in this disparity, another is that the East wanted to promote Valentinian III's reliance on the older and more dominant Theodosius II.<sup>385</sup> The legend on the reverse of this coin, SALVS REIPVBLICAE, provides further evidence into the early presentation of this relationship. By minting these words on this coin, the East associated the safety and security of the state with the legitimate, and dominant, Eastern emperor Theodosius II and his chosen heir, Valentinian III. When one combines these words with the militarised portrayal of Theodosius II on the

<sup>383</sup> CLRE 425.

<sup>384</sup> Kaegi 1968: 20-21; McEvoy 2013: 231.

<sup>385</sup> McEvoy 2013: 230-231.

obverse, this image is further reinforced. Therefore, as this coin was minted soon after the Eastern army left Constantinople for the West, the connection between the Empire's security and Theodosius II is significant in highlighting the initial foundation of his Eastern portrayal as the protector of both empires.

To explore the reception of this presentation within the later literature, it is now necessary to consider the events that led up to the production of this coin, and the joint consulate in 425. Towards the end of 424, a large military expedition was launched from the Constantinople under the leadership of Eastern generals Ardaburius, Aspar, and Candidianus. Galla Placidia, Valentinian III and his sister Honoria, with a retinue of mostly Eastern officials, left with the army and travelled first to Thessalonica.<sup>386</sup> It was during their stay in that city that Helion, the *magister officiorum* in Constantinople, under the order of Theodosius II elevated the then five-year-old Valentinian III to the rank of Caesar.<sup>387</sup> His elevation to this junior rank enabled the East to emphasise Theodosius II's seniority over his young cousin – a perception shown on the imperial coin analysed above. However, as McEvoy has recently pointed out, there was a further justification behind Valentinian III's initial status as Caesar.<sup>388</sup> She has shown that this decision, which was arguably quite unexpected as Valentinian III was expected to rule the West independently, suggests that the East wanted to emphasise to both halves of the Empire that Valentinian III's position was dependent on their support.<sup>389</sup>

Though the Western chronicle of Hydatius claimed that the young Caesar was elevated in Constantinople, contemporary Eastern accounts firmly placed the event in the Macedonian city.<sup>390</sup> Therefore, Theodosius II's absence at Valentinian III's elevation ceremony at Thessalonica requires further mention. Though we cannot state with certainty, it is possible to suggest that for this event in particular it was more advantageous for Theodosius II to celebrate the accession with the citizenry of his capital, rather than the people of Thessalonica. We saw in the previous chapter the ability of this emperor to utilise ceremonial events within his city

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<sup>386</sup> Olymp. Frag. 4.31-2 (in Blockley 1983); Soc. 7.23; Procop. *Vand.* 3.3.8-9; Philostor. *HE* 12.13; Kaegi 1968: 20; Matthews 1975: 380; McEvoy 2013: 230.

<sup>387</sup> Olymp. Frag. 4.31-2 (in Blockley 1983); Philostor. *HE* 12.13; Marcel. *com.* s.a. 424.2; Bury 1919: 3; Matthews 1975: 380; McEvoy 2013: 230.

<sup>388</sup> Though perhaps not the first Theodosian male to be elevated to Caesar. For Honorius' position as in this junior position, see Claud. *IV Cons. Hon.* 169-170; Cameron 1969: 260; Cameron et al. 1993: 3; McEvoy 2013: 137. Cf. Kelly 2016.

<sup>389</sup> McEvoy 2013: 230-231.

<sup>390</sup> Hydatius (75 [84]). Cf. Olymp. Frag. 4.31-2 (in Blockley 1983); Soc. 7.23; Philostor. *HE* 12.13. Olympiodorus was probably present at the event as well. Gillett 1993: 12; Matthews 1975: 382.

to reassert his position – and this event in October 424 would be no different. Moreover, when we consider the victory ceremonial that occurred in the Hippodrome a year after this, we see that Theodosius II utilised such public celebrations of imperial successes to build and cement his relationship with the people of Constantinople. Therefore, we should not interpret the emperor's absence from Thessalonica in 424 as an indication of an inactive or disinterested ruler. Rather, we should see it as a calculated decision made by the Eastern regime to capitalise on the event from Constantinople.

One final event, which occurred sometime during 424, strongly reinforces the image depicted on the coin of Theodosius II as the senior and guardian figure over Valentinian III. Marcellinus *comes* stated that in this year the emperor betrothed his then two-year-old daughter, Licinia Eudoxia, to Valentinian III.<sup>391</sup> McEvoy has shown Licinia Eudoxia's marriage to her cousin was an obvious arrangement for the young princess, especially given the Eastern Theodosian family's efforts to maintain power within their core members.<sup>392</sup> Though certainly true, this act also suggests that Theodosius II and the East was not only committed to supporting Valentinian III as he grew to adulthood, but also pre-emptively took steps to ensure that when this time came, the Eastern emperor could maintain his leading position.

### *On the Road to Rome*

Whilst the Eastern army battled John and his allies, the Western branch of the imperial house, with their retinue of Eastern courtiers, encamped at Aquileia.<sup>393</sup> They were not in city for long when news of John's defeat and capture by Aspar reached them. In celebration of this event, and perhaps coinciding with the usurper's execution in Aquileia's Hippodrome soon after, a coin was minted and disseminated from this Western city.<sup>394</sup> Shown in figure ten below, this coin is almost the exact replica of those produced in Constantinople to celebrate the joint consulate of the two imperial colleagues. Theodosius II is shown on the obverse, in military dress wearing a helmet and diadem, and holding a spear and shield, with the legend, D N THEODO-SIVS P F AVG. The reverse of this coin depicts an enthroned Eastern emperor, wearing a diadem and jewelled consular robes, and a distinctively shorter colleague, standing

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<sup>391</sup> Marcel. *com.* s.a. 424.2.

<sup>392</sup> McEvoy 2013: 229-230. Cf. Connor 2004: 67; Oost 1968: 184-185.

<sup>393</sup> Matthews 1975: 380; McEvoy 2013: 231

<sup>394</sup> The 'A' stamped below Theodosius II's left hand and the 'Q' above Valentinian III's right hand on the coin in figure ten confirms that it was produced by the mint at Aquileia. McEvoy 2010: 248

without a diadem and plain robes. The legend on this coin once again reads, SALVS REIPVBLICAE.



Figure Ten: *Solidus* of Theodosius II.

Though there was no real differentiation or development of Theodosius II and Valentinian III's public portrayal on this coin, it is important to mention here, as this was the first appearance of Valentinian III on official Western coinage. That he was shown on the reverse as a diminutive figure alongside his Eastern colleague established to those in the West the importance of Theodosius II and the East in Valentinian III's fight for the throne. Moreover, similar to the coin examined above, the reverse legend further promoted the connection between the Empire's safety and the dominant Theodosius II. Therefore, the continuity shown through these coins are extremely important as it indicates that the presentation of Theodosius II's seniority over his cousin would not be confined to Constantinople and the East but was an image intended for the entire Empire.

For the description of the final battle between the Eastern forces and John there survives two accounts in Socrates and Olympiodorus. The latter stated that the Eastern general, Ardaburius, was captured by John's men and was held by the usurper at Ravenna. Olympiodorus then related that while this general rallied a mutiny amongst his captors his son, Aspar, quickly travelled to the city with the cavalry and, after a short struggle, captured the usurper.<sup>395</sup> Though this does have an essence of Eastern triumphalism through the comparison between the courageous and quick-thinking Eastern generals and the easily persuaded and mutinous Western troops, Olympiodorus' account lacks any mention of Theodosius II's contribution to the event. Therefore, for an indication into how John's defeat was capitalised on by the Eastern emperor, it is also useful to consider Socrates' account. The author proclaimed that after Ardaburius was captured:

...the prayers of the pious emperor prevailed. For an angel of God, under the appearance of a shepherd, undertook the guidance of Aspar and the troops which were with him, and led him through the lake near Ravenna...now, no one had

<sup>395</sup> Olymp. Frag. 43.1.10; 43.2.20-22 (in Blockley 1983). Cf. Marcel. *com.* s.a. 425.1.

ever been known to have forded that lake before; but God then rendered that passable, which had hitherto been impassable. Having therefore crossed the lake, as if going over dry ground, they found the gates of the city open, and overpowered the usurper.<sup>396</sup>

What is most important about Socrates' version of events is the connection between Theodosius II's piety and the Empire's security. Discussed at length throughout this thesis, the overt and continual presentation of imperial piety resulting in military victories was a key component in the Eastern Theodosian image. Therefore, that Theodosius II's piety extended to protect the West, an Empire that various Eastern media proclaimed his guardianship over, was an interesting extension of his public presentation.<sup>397</sup> Moreover, it is also important to note that, according to Gillett, Socrates did not utilise Olympiodorus' work in his history.<sup>398</sup> Therefore, his account offers an independent perspective of Theodosius II's contemporary portrayal. That he attributed the piety of Theodosius II with the military victory, rather than through the machinations of the Eastern generals, suggests that this presentation of a triumphant and superior Theodosius II was an accurate description of the emperor's contemporary portrayal. This conclusion is further reinforced when one considers Socrates' account of the victory ceremonial in Constantinople, analysed in Chapter Two, which celebrated this event.

The ceremony that accompanied John's execution at Aquileia is another component necessary of mention here as it is a further piece of evidence to suggest the East's involvement in the early stabilisation of Valentinian III's reign and their influence on the public portrayal of the Western Theodosian family. I have already mentioned that after John's capture, the usurper was not killed immediately, but sent to the Western imperial court at Aquileia.<sup>399</sup> It was here in the city's Hippodrome that John, in front of five-year-old Valentinian III and his mother, was paraded on the back of a donkey, mutilated, suffered both verbal and physical abuse by the stage performers and finally executed by beheading.<sup>400</sup> Not only did this gruesome treatment of John send a powerful message throughout the Western Empire, but it also highlighted Eastern involvement in the affair. McCormick has traced the gradual importance

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<sup>396</sup> Soc. 7.23.9-10. Τότε δὴ καὶ τοῦ θεοφιλοῦς βασιλέως εὐχὴ πάλιν ἐξίσχυνεν· ἄγγελος γὰρ Θεοῦ ἐν σχήματι ποιμένος ὁδηγεῖ τὸν Ἀσπαρα καὶ τοὺς σὺν αὐτῷ καὶ ἄγει διὰ τῆς παρακειμένης τῇ Ραβέννῃ λίμνης... ὅθεν οὐδείς οὐδεπώποτε διαβεβηκέναι ιστόρητο. Τότε δὴ καὶ ὁ Θεὸς τὴν ἄβατον βατὴν ἀπειργάσατο· διαβάντες γὰρ <ὡς> διὰ ξηρᾶς τὸ τῆς λίμνης ὕδωρ, ἀνεωγμένας τε τὰς πύλας εὐρόντες τῆς πόλεως, ἐγκρατεῖς τοῦ τυράννου ἐγένοντο.

<sup>397</sup> Van Nuffelen 2013: 133.

<sup>398</sup> Gillett 1993: 9.

<sup>399</sup> Olymp. Frag. 43.2.22-23 (in Blockley 1983).

<sup>400</sup> Olymp. Frag. 43.2.13-25 (in Blockley 1983); Philostor. *HE* 12.13; Procop. *Vand.* 3.3.9; Matthews 1975: 380; McCormick 1985:59-60; McEvoy 2013: 231. Hydatius claimed he was killed at Ravenna: Hydatius (75[84]).

of the Hippodrome in Eastern victory celebrations and stated that by 416 their celebration in this arena was equal to, if not more important than the traditional triumphal entry.<sup>401</sup> From the discussion in Chapter Two, we saw the importance of the Hippodrome in Theodosius II's own imperial ceremonial and the role it played in displaying his power to the citizenry. Therefore, that one of the earliest ceremonial events of Valentinian III's reign to be celebrated in the West had clear Constantinopolitan elements, particularly in its choice of location, suggests not only the control of the East at this time, but also that the new Western ceremonial would be strongly influenced by its Eastern counterpart.

### *The Elevation of Valentinian III to Augustus*

Shortly after John's execution in June or July 425, Valentinian III and his retinue left Aquileia and travelled to Rome. It was here, in the ancient capital of the Empire, where Valentinian III, only one year after his accession as Caesar, was proclaimed Augustus of the West. Before analysing the textual sources relating to this event, it is first necessary to consider how his elevation affected Theodosius II's contemporary presentation. Two gold *solidi* depicting both Theodosius II and Valentinian III were minted in Constantinople, perhaps in early 426 in celebration of their second joint consulate.<sup>402</sup> The obverse of these coins show militarised emperors, wearing a helmet and pearl diadem, and carrying a spear and shield. The portrayals of these emperors are so similar that they are only differentiated through their legends.<sup>403</sup> The first legend, figure eleven, indicates that this emperor is Theodosius II, D N THEODO-SIVS P F AVG, and the second, figure twelve, is the emperor Valentinian III, D N VALENTIN-IANVS P F AVG. Therefore, these coins are the first piece of Eastern evidence where the titles of the two emperors are equal. However, this does not suggest that with Valentinian III's elevation in 425, the East began to promote an image of equality between the two Augusti. This conclusion is supported by the portrayal of both emperors on the reverse side of these coins.

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<sup>401</sup> McCormick 1986: 59-60, 92.

<sup>402</sup> CLRE 426.

<sup>403</sup> See above for this presentation in other Augusti and Augustae.





Figure Eleven: *Solidus* of Theodosius II.



Figure Twelve: *Solidus* of Valentinian III.



On both coins, Theodosius II is enthroned, wearing his diadem and bejewelled consular robes. Though this continues the emperor's portrayal on the numismatic material analysed above, the slight modification of Valentinian III's appearance is key to the coin's importance. He is shown, for the first time, enthroned, wearing a diadem and bejewelled robes, which suggest that his altered portrayal was connected to his elevation to Augustus. However, it is important to reinforce that Theodosius II was still shown as the larger more dominant figure on this coin. Therefore, by continuing to emphasise Valentinian III's youth, the Eastern regime could further promote the young emperor's dependence on Theodosius II's support, despite their equal rank of Augusti.

This portrayal of the Eastern emperor as the more senior member of the imperial college also appeared on imperial coins minted at Rome perhaps shortly after Valentinian III's elevation. Figure thirteen displays an adult portrayal of the six-year-old Valentinian III wearing his imperial insignia and the legend D N PL VALENTI-NIANVS P F AVG. Though there was no correlation between the emperor's depiction on the obverse and his actual age, this thesis has already mentioned the presentation of child-emperors as adult rulers on coinage. The reverse, however, shows two figures facing forward, on the left is Theodosius II and on the right is a smaller Valentinian III, who is being crowned by the hand of God. Both emperors are holding a long cross in their left hand and a globe in their right and between them is a human-headed serpent. The legend on the reverse reads VICTORI-A AVGGG. Numerous aspects of this coin are worth further discussion. First is the ongoing portrayal of Theodosius II as the larger and more senior member of the college on imperial mints outside Constantinople. Therefore, the Roman mint continued this presentation of the two emperors in Western coinage first evident through the coin minted at Aquileia.



Figure Thirteen: *Solidus* of Valentinian III.

Second is the imagery of Valentinian III being crowned by the hand of God. Though sporadically used on coinage minted at Ravenna for Honorius and Galla Placidia, this portrayal, which originated on Arcadius' coronation coinage, had become a prominent aspect of Eastern Theodosian iconography.<sup>404</sup> Its use here on Valentinian III's coin from Rome, coupled with Galla Placidia's coin shown above, which portrayed the empress being crowned by the hand of God, indicates the systematic effort of the Eastern regime to present the two imperial families as unified through their official presentation. The final aspect is the image of victory shown on this coin. This is evident through not only the legend, *VICTORIA* (victory), but also the human-headed serpent presumably meant to represent John. That this serpent was placed between the two emperors suggests a joint victory of his defeat, and the long cross placed atop his head by Valentinian III indicates that a legitimate ruler was installed.<sup>405</sup> However, through Theodosius II's larger portrayal we should interpret this coin as a Western perspective of the Eastern emperor's role in this event and his prominent position over his young colleague. Therefore, the coin from Rome further reinforces the conclusion that Theodosius II's pre-eminence over his colleague was not confined to Constantinople and the East but spread with the movement of Valentinian III and his retinue.

How this perception of Theodosius II and Valentinian III's relationship on the contemporary numismatic evidence correlated to the literary evidence relating to the events of 425 will now be discussed. Therefore, throughout this final section two imperial ceremonies, the accession of Valentinian III to the rank of Augustus and Honoria to Augusta, will be analysed to explore the level of Eastern influence over these events. The former event, Valentinian III's accession, occurred one year after his elevation to Caesar in the ancient imperial capital of Rome. That it was meant to be a hugely spectacular affair that highlighted the East's dominant role in its fruition is suggested through Theodosius II's desire to be present. Socrates informs us that the

<sup>404</sup> RIC X Honorius 1310 (Honorius), 1333 (Galla Placidia). McEvoy 2013: 206. RIC X Honorius 1343 showed the image of Galla Placidia without the hand of God addition.

<sup>405</sup> Gillett 1993: 20.

Eastern emperor did intend to elevate Valentinian III personally and even left the city, but after falling ill at Thessalonica returned to Constantinople.<sup>406</sup> He then nominated Helion, the same *magister officiorum* who elevated Valentinian III to Caesar, to do the honours in his stead.<sup>407</sup>

Arguably, the selection of Rome as the locus for Valentinian III's accession was a choice intended by the Eastern government to better promote the Western emperor's position. Selecting the ancient capital may have surprised some, as the city witnessed few elevations throughout the last century.<sup>408</sup> However, its choice clearly suggests that the East understood the power and importance of imperial ceremonial displays in reinforcing an emperor's position.<sup>409</sup> If we consider Theodosius II's ability to connect with the people of his city through these events, as shown in Chapter Two, we can see how Valentinian III's accession would aid in the connection between Rome and its new child-emperor. Therefore, this reinforces the conclusion made by numerous scholars that Rome was chosen in an attempt to gain the support of the Roman aristocracy.<sup>410</sup> That the imperial family needed to promote their position in this imperial capital over all others was perhaps linked to the elevation of John in the city.<sup>411</sup> However, whether Rome actually supported the usurper is a contested topic in modern scholarship. Wilkes, for example, stated that John's quick departure from the city for Ravenna suggests that he did not have the backing of the people, quoting a surviving inscription to reinforce his argument.<sup>412</sup> This inscription, found at the Aventine Hill at Rome, was dedicated in support of the Caesar Valentinian by the second time city prefect, Anicius Acilius Glabrio Faustus.<sup>413</sup> McEvoy has outlined some faults in Wilkes' conclusion – namely that there is no certifiable date for the inscription.<sup>414</sup> She showed that though it could have been dedicated upon Valentinian III's elevation to Caesar in October 424, the earliest definitive date for Faustus' second prefecture was not until July 425.<sup>415</sup> Therefore, it is possible that the

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<sup>406</sup> Soc. 7.24.4-5. See also CTh. 6.10.4, 6.22.8 for confirmation of his journey. McEvoy 2013: 232; Wilkes 1972: 391-392.

<sup>407</sup> Soc. 7.24.5.

<sup>408</sup> Honorius was perhaps elevated to Caesar (discussed above). Maxentius well elevated in 306 by the Praetorian Guard at Rome: Lactant. *De mort. pers.* 26.1-3; Soc. 1.2.6. Nepotianus was proclaimed Augustus at Rome in 350 by the opponents of Magnentius: Amm. Marc. 28.1.1; Soc. 2.25.10; Soz. 4.1.2.

<sup>409</sup> McEvoy 2013: 232. Cf. Wilkes 1972: 391 who attributed to move to Galla Placidia.

<sup>410</sup> Humphries 2012: 165; Matthews 1975: 385; McEvoy 2013: 232.

<sup>411</sup> Procop. *Vand.* 3.3.5. Matthews 1975: 356, 379; McEvoy 2013: 227.

<sup>412</sup> Wilkes 1972: 391.

<sup>413</sup> ILS 803. *d. n. Valentiniano florentissimo Caesari Anicius Acilius [G]la[b]r[io] Faustus v. c. iterum praefectus urbi repara[vit]*. Davenport 2014: 62.

<sup>414</sup> McEvoy 2013: 227 n.10

<sup>415</sup> CTh 16.5.62; McEvoy 2013: 227-228 n.10. PLRE II Anicius Acilius Glabrio Faustus 8.

inscription was erected shortly after John's death in June/July 425 and Valentinian III's accession to Augustus in October that year.<sup>416</sup> If the loyalty of Rome was in question, then a legitimate imperial elevation may have been an attempt by the Eastern Theodosian regime to assert Valentinian III's legitimacy in the ancient capital. This was an obvious replication of what had been implemented in Constantinople since the reign of Theodosius I and, as Theodosius II's rule had thus far proved, it was hugely successful.

Unfortunately, we have no surviving account that details the ceremonial events surrounding Valentinian III's accession. Olympiodorus, who was perhaps in Rome at the time, concluded his history with the brief mention that Helion placed the robe of an emperor on Valentinian III.<sup>417</sup> Though he did not use the last pages of his history to detail the occasion, he did describe the city itself. He mentioned the large income of many households, stating that some could be a medium-sized city, and commented on Rome's walls, the enormity of their public baths and the amount spent on their public games.<sup>418</sup> Van Nuffelen has argued that this digression was purely intentional on Olympiodorus' part and that his history did not lose its air of Eastern triumphalism in its description of Rome's magnificence. Rather, he utilised this digression to set the scene for Valentinian III's accession and to highlight that the ancestral heartland of the Roman Empire had returned to imperial control.<sup>419</sup> Of course, Theodosius II was the beneficiary of this praise – through his actions, the West was saved from the hands of a usurper, and a legitimate emperor was proclaimed in the ancestral capital.<sup>420</sup> Therefore, in the closing pages of his history, Olympiodorus not only portrayed Theodosius II as the protector of the Western imperial family, but also of Rome and its majesty.<sup>421</sup>

The elevation of Valentinian's elder sister, Honoria, to Augusta is the final event necessary to discuss as it suggests that the East influenced the Western imperial image. Compared to other Theodosian Augustae, Honoria's elevation, and much of her life, has been overlooked in the surviving ancient literary sources. As such, there is contention within modern literature as to when and where her rise to this rank occurred. Bury and McEvoy, have argued that this event probably occurred at Rome in conjunction with or soon after Valentinian III's own accession

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<sup>416</sup> McEvoy 2013: 227 n.10.

<sup>417</sup> Olymp. Frag. 43.1.16-17 (in Blockley 1983).

<sup>418</sup> Olymp. Frag. 41.1-2 (in Blockley 1983).

<sup>419</sup> Van Nuffelen 2013: 148.

<sup>420</sup> Van Nuffelen 2013:148.

<sup>421</sup> Van Nuffelen 2013: 149.

in 425.<sup>422</sup> Schaft, on the other hand, placed her elevation to 437 during the marriage of Valentinian to Licinia Eudoxia.<sup>423</sup> However, other contemporary evidence, such as her description in the church of Saint John the Evangelist in Ravenna, dated to the late 420s, as Honoria Augusta and her appearance on imperial coinage, firmly reinforces Bury and McEvoy's conclusion that her accession occurred at Rome in 425.<sup>424</sup> If this conclusion is correct then Rome witnessed consecutive grand elevations of two Western imperial members and partook in their accompanying ceremonies. The justification behind the time and place of this event is linked to Valentinian III's elevation discussed above – it was a way for the Western imperial family to assert their position to the nobles of Rome and affirm Valentinian III's role as their emperor.

Bury and McEvoy have suggested two hypotheses for Honoria's rise to Augusta at the young age of 7/8. Firstly, Bury suggested that Honoria was elevated as a precautionary measure: if Galla Placidia should die whilst Valentinian III was still young then Honoria could take over their mother's role as guardian.<sup>425</sup> McEvoy highlighted that despite the youth of Honoria herself, only a year or so older than Valentinian III, it was quite possible that she could have filled this 'guardian' role as Pulcheria was only a few years older than Theodosius II after her elevation in 414.<sup>426</sup> Moreover, McEvoy provided a second possibility: Honoria was elevated to be a potential heiress to the throne – should Valentinian III die, Honoria could be married to a suitable candidate who would then become Western emperor. However, she has conceded that a suitable candidate would have been hard to find.<sup>427</sup> Therefore, I would add another possibility to these two. Honoria's elevation was intentionally done, not just as a precautionary measure or as a guardian figure, but to promote an image of unity that had been successfully established in the East for eleven years. We saw in Chapter One that Pulcheria's elevation in 414 and the presentation of a young imperial couple aided in the early stability of Theodosius II's rule. Therefore, as the Eastern empress was the only other child-Augusta in recent memory, her long-term and ongoing success in Constantinople no doubt provided the framework behind Honoria's elevation at this time.

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<sup>422</sup> Bury 1919: 3; McEvoy 2013: 238. Also, see Holum 1982: 130; Oost 1968: 193.

<sup>423</sup> Schaft 1990: 439-440 followed by Stickler 2002: 126-127.

<sup>424</sup> Inscription see: CIL 11.276; numismatic evidence: RIC X Valentinian III 2021-2022, 2053, 2055, 2063, 2068.

<sup>425</sup> Bury 1919: 5 followed by McEvoy 2013: 239.

<sup>426</sup> McEvoy 2013: 239.

<sup>427</sup> McEvoy 2013: 239.

Though Valentinian III's early reign was in some ways similar to Theodosius II's, in that they were both children upon their accession, the young Western emperor still had a living mother. As such, Galla Placidia was a dominant figure within the surviving literature on the early reign of Valentinian III.<sup>428</sup> This is very similar to Pulcheria's description during Theodosius II's youth. However, as I argued in Chapter One, this rhetoric of dominance is very misleading, and a close reading of the contemporary sources suggests she and Theodosius II had a more equal relationship. I suggested in this chapter that the prominent portrayal of Pulcheria was part of a strategy of differentiating her from Arcadia and Marina, which enabled her to be presented as Theodosius II's female counterpart. However, it would be incorrect to assume that Galla Placidia was intended to assume the female role of the imperial couple with her son, as Pulcheria did with Theodosius II. Rather, I would suggest that Galla Placidia, alongside Valentinian III and Honoria, were meant to portray the image of an imperial unit. This is once again similar to the image promoted in the East after Eudocia's elevation to Augusta in 423. Recalling this earlier discussion, I argued that after Eudocia's accession the central regime produced an image of imperial unity between Theodosius II, Pulcheria and Eudocia. Therefore, the incorporation of some aspects of the Eastern Theodosian image into the public portrayal of their Western counterparts indicates its successfulness in contributing to an emperor's position and reinforces the role of the Eastern regime in modifying the public presentation of Valentinian III and his family.

In the late 420s, after the imperial family moved to Ravenna, Galla Placidia, fulfilling a vow made whilst she and her young children were in peril on the sea, funded the construction of a basilica dedicated to Saint John the Evangelist.<sup>429</sup> Inside this church, a triumphal arch depicted the busts of nine imperial members: Constantine I, Theodosius I, Arcadius and Honorius, Valentinian I, Gratian, Constantius III and the two dead infant sons of Theodosius I and Galla, Gratian and Johannes, and Galla Placidia's own dead son, Theodosius.<sup>430</sup> What, or rather who, was missing from this triumphal arch is Theodosius II. That he was omitted here has led some

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<sup>428</sup> Olymp. Frag. 43.1-2 (in Blockley 1983) mentioned her alongside Valentinian III heading West with the Eastern army. Soc. 7.24.3 stated that Theodosius II put matters under her charge (...τῇ μητρὶ αὐτοῦ Πλακιδία τὴν φροντίδα τῶν πραγμάτων ἐπιτρέψας). Similar to the discussion in Chapter One, Galla Placidia did not have official power over the administration. Socrates' account must imply internal administration of the family and court. However, numerous modern works have portrayed Galla Placidia as a domineering figure in these events. For example see Oost 1968; Salisbury 2015; Sivan 2011.

<sup>429</sup> CIL 11.276 = ILS 818; Agnellus 42; Bury 1919: 3; McEvoy 2013: 237; Rossi 1572: 85. For the move see, Gillett 2001: 142.

<sup>430</sup> CIL 11.276 = ILS 818; Rossi 1572: 85. See Deliyannis 2010: 63-70; McEvoy 2013: 237 for more on the arch.

scholars to conclude that the mosaic was intended by Galla Placidia to separate her Western family from the East.<sup>431</sup> However, as McEvoy has argued, this conclusion discounted the presence of Eastern emperors on the arch, the ongoing Eastern support in the West in the late 420s, and the betrothal of Valentinian III to the Eastern princess, Licinia Eudoxia.<sup>432</sup>

To continue McEvoy's conclusions, it is clear that all the imperial members depicted on this arch were deceased. The inclusion of a living Theodosius II therefore would not be justified. Moreover, through a sixteenth century description of the church, we can see that Theodosius II's image was not excluded. Depicted on the wall above the clergy's bench were the busts of Arcadius and Eudoxia on the right, and Theodosius II and Eudocia on the left.<sup>433</sup> By placing these two Eastern emperors in one of the most visible places inside the church, Galla Placidia publicly announced her connection to the Eastern Empire, and reinforced its ongoing support of the Western imperial family.<sup>434</sup> Therefore, the imagery within this church, constructed in the late 420s, not only ostentatiously declared the dynastic legitimacy of the new Western emperor, but also proclaimed Theodosius II's support in his position.

By the end of 425, the East had successfully installed their chosen colleague onto the Western throne, removed a usurper, stabilised the Empire, and modified key aspects of the public presentation of the Western imperial family to align with their Eastern image. Through all these successes, Theodosius II was presented in both numismatic evidence and literary sources as Valentinian III's guardian and the protector of the West. For the next few years, Eastern diplomatic and military presence would continue throughout the Western Empire and, as a result, stability, peace, and prosperity would ensue – a victory that could be claimed by Theodosius II.<sup>435</sup> More than this, neither the emperor nor the East would abandon their Western colleagues after Valentinian III's position as Western Roman Emperor was secured, but continued throughout the remaining twenty years of Theodosius II reign. Therefore, the following section will analyse the next major event that publicly promoted the senior position

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<sup>431</sup> Holum 1982: 128 n.71.

<sup>432</sup> McEvoy 2013: 237.

<sup>433</sup> CIL 11.276 = ILS 818; Rossi 1572: 85. Deliyannis 2010: 68; McEvoy 2013: 238. Brubaker 1997: 54 wrongly named these figures as Theodosius II's children.

<sup>434</sup> Deliyannis 2010: 68; McEvoy 2013: 237-238.

<sup>435</sup> Ardarburius was made Western consul in 427: Soc. 7.28.4; CLRE 427; Kaegi 1968: 23; McEvoy 2013: 234. Helion was attested in the West in 426: CTh 6.27.20; Honoré 1998: 255; McEvoy 2013: 234, 242. Flavius Constantius Felix might have also been an Eastern official: Kaegi 1968: 23; McEvoy 2013: 233-234, 242; PLRE II Fl. Constantius Felix 14.

of the Eastern emperor over his Western counterpart and secured the image of unity between these twin Empires – the wedding of Licinia Eudoxia and Valentinian III.

#### 4.1 The Father-in-Law

The coinage of the latter half of the 420s and into the 430s clearly suggests that the Eastern portrayal of Theodosius II as the senior member and guardian figure over Valentinian III continued. For example, a coin minted in Constantinople in 430 in celebration of their third joint consulship reinforces the contemporary continuation of this image.<sup>436</sup> Shown in figure fourteen, the obverse depicts the bust of Theodosius II, identified through the legend D N THEODO-SIVS P F AVG. The reverse, similar to other consular coinage analysed in this chapter, portrays two enthroned and nimbate emperors, both wearing consular robes and imperial insignia. Once again, Theodosius II is displayed as the larger, more senior figure over his Western co-emperor, signifying that five years after his initial installation, the East continued to promote the pre-eminence of their emperor.



Figure Fourteen: *Solidus* of Theodosius II.

The image of unity and co-operation between the two Empires throughout this period was shown on monumental media as well. Through literary sources, we can see that at least four statues were erected in Constantinople portraying Valentinian III.<sup>437</sup> Though no account of statues portraying Theodosius II survive in Rome, two inscriptions on the balustrade in the Colosseum promote the unity between these emperors.<sup>438</sup> Outside the image of collegiality between the East and West on official media, the Eastern government also provided military support throughout these years. In 429, Valentinian III faced his first major military crisis when the Vandals left Spain and invaded North Africa.<sup>439</sup> Eastern troops, under the leadership

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<sup>436</sup> CLRE 430.

<sup>437</sup> LSA 36, 48, 470, 2735. Davenport 2014: 62.

<sup>438</sup> CIL 6.32086, 32088. *[perpet]uorum invicti[ssi]mor[um] principu[m]*. Davenport 2014: 62; Humphries 2012: 171-172.

<sup>439</sup> Hydatius (80 [90]); Procop. *Vand.* 3.3.26-27, 32-34. Merrills et al. 2010: 54-55; McEvoy 2013: 255-256; Oost 1968: 224-227.



of Aspar, were sent in aid after the Western general, Boniface, proved unable to combat the Vandals alone.<sup>440</sup> Though this invasion seriously threatened the important grain shipments from this region – thus, making it an interest for both empires – Eastern military involvement provided another opportunity for the regime to reinforce the portrayal of their emperor developed between 423 and 425. Therefore, though Eastern support at this time may have been necessary for the survival of the West, the image of a stronger more senior East protecting the West should not be overlooked.<sup>441</sup>

There is no surviving account that reveals how Theodosius II might have been portrayed during this event. However, other references that mention the emperor's military expeditions in the West provide an indication into how later sources perceived his actions. Recalling Sozomen's earlier passage on the events in 410, we can see the portrayal of a young emperor protecting the West and his uncle's position.<sup>442</sup> Though I would in no way suggest that this was an accurate image of the Eastern emperor in 410, Sozomen's description of this event ensured Theodosius II was presented in the Eastern tradition as the West's guardian, whether it was during the reign of Honorius or Valentinian III. Moreover, Evagrius highlighted the longer-term reception of Theodosius II's actions in the West. He states:

In the times of Theodosius [III], repeated revolts took place in Europe, during the reign of Valentinian [III] in Rome. These were crushed by Theodosius, who sent out for that purpose large land and naval forces.<sup>443</sup>

By collectively dealing with all the revolts that plagued Valentinian III's reign, Evagrius presented the image of a stronger Eastern guardian who continually, and successfully, protected his weaker Western counterpart. Moreover, it is important to highlight here that the author presented all these Eastern expeditions as crushing triumphs, when in reality the only decisive victory in the West was the defeat of John in 425.<sup>444</sup> Therefore, as Evagrius wrote in the sixth century, his unidentified source, perhaps a contemporary or near contemporary to Theodosius

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<sup>440</sup> Procop. *Vand.* 3.3.29-32; Merrills et al. 2010: 54-55; McEvoy 2013: 255-256; McEvoy 2014: 249.

<sup>441</sup> McEvoy 2010: 175 ; McEvoy 2013: 255.

<sup>442</sup> Soz. 9.8.6-7; Zos. 6.8.1-3.

<sup>443</sup> Evagr. *HE* 1.19. Ἐν τοῖς αὐτοῖς χρόνοις Θεοδοσίου ἐπαναστάσεις συχναὶ κατὰ τὴν Εὐρώπην γεγόνασιν, Οὐαλεντινιανοῦ Ῥώμης βασιλεῦοντος· ὅς καὶ καθέειλε Θεοδόσιος μεγάλας δυνάμεις ἐκπέμψας κατὰ γῆν τε καὶ θάλασσαν περὶ τὴν τε καὶ νηϊτὴ στρατῶ.

<sup>444</sup> This expedition resulted in a treaty: Procop. *Vand.* 3.4.13; Merrills et al. 2010: 55; McEvoy 2013: 255-256; McEvoy 2014: 249. The second expedition, when the Vandals occupied Carthage (439) and invaded Sicily (440), made no significant gains before being recalled: Marcel. *com.* s.a. 439.3; *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 439; Hydatius (107[115]) (Carthage); *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 439; Hydatius (112[120]); Theoph. AM 5941 (Sicily); Prisc. 9.4.1-20 (in Blockley 1983); Theoph. AM 5942 (recall). Kelly 2008: 91; McEvoy 2013: 261-262. For Western rhetoric of the East and Theodosius II as protector in the 440s, see NVal. 9. ...*atque invictissimi principis Theodosii patris nostri iam propinquet exercitus...*

II's reign, perpetuated an image of the Eastern emperor as the protector of the West. Moreover, that this was the ongoing perception of Theodosius II more than a century after his death indicates the successfulness in its contemporary portrayal.

The repeated military support and presence in the West was an important aspect that firmly asserted Theodosius II's image as the protector and guiding figure over Valentinian III throughout the early 430s. However, without adaptation, this image would have become redundant as Valentinian III grew older and Western court members, such as the general Aetius, asserted a more powerful position. As such, the marriage of Theodosius II's only surviving child, Licinia Eudoxia, in 437 was utilised by the Eastern court to ensure this perception continued to be promulgated throughout their Empire. More than this, this marriage ensured the development of Theodosius II's Eastern portrayal of Valentinian III's guardian into his father and secured the image of unity between the two Empires.<sup>445</sup>

Though Theodosius II betrothed his infant daughter to Valentinian III in 424, the situation of the Eastern imperial family and the question of succession was markedly different in 437. When the arrangement was initially made, the regime could have reasonably expected the imperial couple to conceive a male heir.<sup>446</sup> By the mid-430s, however, it was clear that Licinia Eudoxia would be the only surviving child of this union, and the only legitimate continuator of the Theodosian dynasty in the East.<sup>447</sup> That she was still married to Valentinian III clearly shows the East's long-term commitment to the image of unity, as a son born to this marriage would have a legitimate claim over both empires.<sup>448</sup> The literary and documentary material related to the wedding clearly highlights the role of Theodosius II in this event, and his overall pre-eminent presentation. Therefore, what follows is an analysis of this material, beginning first with the numismatic evidence and concluding with the contemporary Eastern literary account of the event.

The first piece of evidence that overwhelmingly promotes Theodosius II's role in facilitating the marriage between his daughter and the Western emperor is the remarkable gold *solidus*

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<sup>445</sup> Gillett 1993: 20; McEvoy 2013: 229.

<sup>446</sup> That they did and the young boy died, see Barnes 2007; Brubaker 1997: 54; Cameron 2016: 62, 74; PLRE Arcadius 1. Cf. Holum 1982: 178 n.14; Kelly 2013a: 54 n.176; McEvoy 2013: 238 n.67, 265 n.22.

<sup>447</sup> Gillett 1993: 23; McEvoy 2013: 256.

<sup>448</sup> McEvoy 2013: 256; Oost 1968: 243.

minted in Constantinople in celebration of the marriage. Unlike the obverse of this coin, (figure fifteen), which portrays a common militaristic bust of Theodosius II, the images on the reverse highlights the uniqueness and importance of this issue.<sup>449</sup> Three nimbate figures are depicted on the reverse of this coin: the middle, and largest, figure depicts Theodosius II shown wearing his imperial crown and royal regalia. To his left is the smaller figure of Valentinian III, also wearing his crown and royal regalia, and to his right is an equally small Licinia Eudoxia in her imperial dress. Theodosius II's arms are on the outside shoulders of Valentinian III and Licinia Eudoxia, whose hands are clasped together in the centre. Therefore, through this coin, the East was able to promote three important images: (i) the physical manifestation of imperial unity between East and West, (ii) the role of Theodosius II in bringing about this unity, and (iii) his position as Valentinian III's father.



Figure Fifteen: *Solidus* of Theodosius II.

We have seen throughout this thesis the important role of imperial unity in aiding the long-term stability of an emperor's position. Though during the reigns of Honorius and Arcadius there were, at times, demonstrations of imperial unity between the two courts, this act in 437 exceeded any past attempts. Therefore, the marriage of his only surviving child to the Western emperor in Constantinople produced an outstanding physical display of imperial unity and co-operation between the two courts.<sup>450</sup> Moreover, as Theodosius II was continually portrayed on imperial coinage as Valentinian III's guardian and protector of the West, it is unsurprising that the Eastern emperor was once more shown alongside the wedded couple. However, for this coin more can be said, as there are two telling components in Theodosius II's depiction that indicates how the regime wanted to portray their emperor during and after this event. That he was shown as the largest figure on the coin ensured that the viewer knew who the more prominent and powerful emperor was. Though Valentinian III's shorter stature on coinage was not new, his marriage to the Eastern princess symbolised that the then eighteen-year-old

<sup>449</sup> Kaegi 1968: 28; McEvoy 2013: 257.

<sup>450</sup> Gillett 1993: 22-24; Holum 1982: 209; Matthews 1993: 43; McEvoy 2013: 257.

emperor had reached adulthood and should, in theory, be shown as an equal to Theodosius II.<sup>451</sup> For example, imperial coins minted at Aquileia between 378 and 383 depict the emperors Gratian, Valentinian II and Theodosius I as an equal size, and when Arcadius and Honorius were shown on coins produced by the central mint, the brothers were always level.<sup>452</sup> Moreover, as discussed in Chapter One and mentioned above, upon Theodosius II's accession to full Augustus in 408, the youth of the emperor was not highlighted on coins struck in Constantinople.<sup>453</sup> Therefore, that the Eastern regime continued to portray Valentinian III as a smaller figure alongside Theodosius II, even after he grew to adulthood, suggests that whilst this emperor ruled in the East, his public relationship with his Western colleague would never be depicted as equal.

Not only does this coin promote the pre-eminent position of Theodosius II, but it also advertised his central role in bringing Valentinian III and Licinia Eudoxia together. This was physically shown on the coin through the placement of Theodosius II's hands on the shoulders of the young wedded couple. This perception was quite true as without the East's initial actions beginning in 424 and their ongoing support of the West, Valentinian III would perhaps not be emperor nor married to the Eastern princess. However, I would argue that the placement of Theodosius II's hands on their shoulders also indicates his new legal position over Valentinian III and the development of his public portrayal. From his accession to Caesar in 424, the East portrayed Theodosius II as a guiding figure over the young Valentinian III. However, as I stated earlier, as Valentinian III grew older and powerful members of his court emerged, this imagery perhaps would not be enough to maintain his perceived influence over the West. Therefore, the marriage in 437 provided the Eastern regime another opportunity to develop Theodosius II's public image in relation to the West and ensure his position over Valentinian III remained in the long term. With this in mind, I would argue that the placement of Theodosius II's hands on the shoulders of Valentinian III and Licinia Eudoxia not only represented his role in bringing them together, but also his permanent position as their father.

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<sup>451</sup> The coinage of Arcadius, Honorius, and Theodosius II showed Theodosius to be smaller than his adult and senior colleagues. Upon his accession to sole emperor in 408, however, this perception changed and both emperors were depicted as equal, despite the age difference. See RIC X Arcadius 142-144 and RIC X Theodosius II (East) 399-400 for comparison.

<sup>452</sup> RIC IX Aquileia 21A, 21B, 40A, 40B (Gratian, Valentinian II and Theodosius I). RIC X Arcadius 142-144 (Arcadius and Honorius). RIC X Arcadius 3 minted at Sirmium also shows the two emperors as an equal size.

<sup>453</sup> RIC X Theodosius II (East) 409-410.

Considering that this was the image distributed by the Eastern Theodosian regime, let us now consider how the literary evidence interpreted Theodosius II's presentation. The only extant contemporary literary account of the marriage survives in Socrates' history. He states:

His [Theodosius II's] cousin Valentinian [III], appointed by him emperor of the West, asked to take her [Licinia Eudoxia] in marriage. And when the emperor Theodosius had given his consent, they determined the marriage should be held somewhere in the middle of the two capitals, and having divided the way it seemed the wedding should be held in Thessalonica. But Valentinian revealed that he [Theodosius II] should not take the trouble to go, for he would come to Constantinople.<sup>454</sup>

The opening line of this passage plainly declared the superior position of Theodosius II – it was only through his selection, and accompanying efforts, that Valentinian III became emperor in the West. As such, this line reinforces the earlier findings that the Eastern portrayal of this relationship between the two emperors did not change with the growing age of Valentinian III. The second half of this opening sentence is also indicative of their public relationship – though Valentinian III was initially betrothed to the Eastern princess in 424, he still had to ask for permission to marry her. This implies that the betrothal was not binding to Theodosius II, who could have easily withdrawn his consent. Considering the succession situation mentioned above, that Eastern emperor still agreed to marry his daughter to Valentinian III perhaps suggests that he hoped that a son born of their union would rule the Empire as a whole.<sup>455</sup> It further indicates that Theodosius II and the East wanted to continue and even extend their closely intertwined relationship with the West. Once Theodosius II provided his consent, a location, apparently halfway between the two courts, was decided. Though this would suggest an equal relationship between the two emperors, it is the final line that clearly portrayed Theodosius II's elevated position. On writing to the emperor, Valentinian III proclaimed that Theodosius II should not have to travel for the wedding and that he would himself cover the entire distance to Constantinople.<sup>456</sup>

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<sup>454</sup> Soc. 7.44. Ταύτην Οὐαλεντινιανὸς ὁ ἀνεψιὸς ὁ ὑπ' αὐτοῦ τῶν ἐσπερίων μερῶν καταστάς βασιλεὺς ἤτησε πρὸς γάμον λαβεῖν. Ὡς δὲ ὁ βασιλεὺς ἐπένευσεν Θεοδοσίος καὶ ἐβουλεύοντο ἐν μεσαιχμῷ που τοὺς γάμους τελέσαι, ἐδόκει δὲ μερισμένους τὴν ὁδὸν ἐν τῇ Θεσσαλονίκῃ τοῦτο ποιῆσαι, μηνύει Οὐαλεντινιανὸς μὴ σκύλλεσθαι· αὐτὸς γὰρ ἤξειν εἰς τὴν Κωνσταντινούπολιν. Ἀσφαλισάμενος οὖν τὰ ἐσπέρια μέρη αὐτὸς ἐπὶ τὴν Κωνσταντινούπολιν παραγίνεται τοῦ γάμου χάριν. Translated by author. Cf. Merobaudes *Carm.* I.10; Marcel. *com.* s.a. 437; *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 437.

<sup>455</sup> McEvoy 2013: 256; Oost 1968: 243.

<sup>456</sup> He perhaps left from Ravenna. Gillett 2001: 144-145

We cannot definitively state whether the negotiation of the marriage location between the two courts actually took place, though we can state how this passage portrayed the Eastern emperor.<sup>457</sup> It is hard to image, considering the importance of imperial ceremonial in Constantinople analysed in Chapter Two, that Theodosius II and his regime would relinquish the opportunity to celebrate an imperial wedding in his city. When one considers that it was the only surviving child of the Eastern imperial couple being wed, plus the first and only other imperial wedding to be celebrated in the capital since 421, the chances become even slither. Therefore, I would conclude that Socrates included this quasi-deliberation to reinforce Theodosius II's seniority. By having Valentinian III willingly suggest that he would journey the entire distance to Constantinople, purely so the Eastern emperor would not have to travel, implies an air of respect on the Western emperor's part. It is the type of respect a son would show his father. If Theodosius II had demanded the wedding be held in Constantinople, he would possibly be perceived as an arrogant ruler. Therefore, in having Valentinian III relinquish the notion of both courts travelling halfway without any Eastern persuasion or demands, Socrates portrayed a fatherly, senior, and powerful perception of Theodosius II. When this line is combined with the opening statement that proclaimed Theodosius II as an emperor-maker, we can clearly see the pre-eminent position of the Eastern emperor.

Overall, if we take the coin and Socrates' passage together, a cohesive portrayal of Theodosius II in the East appears – he was the senior member of the imperial college who brought about the display of physical unity between the twin Empires. Moreover, as this wedding enabled the Eastern regime to portray Theodosius II as Valentinian III's father, this event ensured the longevity of the East's influence in the West. Therefore, this example reinforces a common theme discussed throughout this thesis – the continuous evolution of Theodosius II's public image throughout his forty-two-year sole reign. Without this adaptation, the East would not have been able to maintain the portrayal of Theodosius II guiding Valentinian III as this emperor grew to adulthood and established his own position in the West. Therefore, similar to previous chapters, this example has shown that Theodosius II's public image was not static, but adapted when necessary.

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<sup>457</sup> Though possible as Theodosius I and Galla were married at Thessalonica – a marriage that symbolised the unity of East and West. Zos. 4.43-44.3; Philostor. *HE* 10.7; Soc. 4.31.17-18.

### 5.1 The Legal Father

The final example examined here deals with, perhaps, the greatest achievement of Theodosius II's reign – the codification of Roman law.<sup>458</sup> Though the work itself, which began in 429, represents a long period of co-operation and unity between the Eastern and Western Empires, the actual project was announced, compiled, and completed in the East, by Eastern officials.<sup>459</sup> Therefore, this exclusivity promoted the image of Eastern dominance and highlighted the seniority and pre-eminence of their emperor that was first established in 424. The portrayal of a superior East continued throughout the 430s as the completed work was handed over to Western officials in Constantinople shortly after the wedding in 437.<sup>460</sup> However, the pre-eminent presentation of Theodosius II was not only implied by the Eastern monopoly over this event but was explicitly stated in the two edicts read in the Senate at Constantinople in 429 and 435. Therefore, throughout this final section, the image of Theodosius II will be analysed through two edicts that survive in Book One of the Theodosian Code to explore the contemporary presentation of the emperor in the East during the law's codification. This section will then examine the speech given by the Western official, Anicius Acilius Glabrio Faustus, to senators at Rome that announced the ratification of the Code in 438. Therefore, this investigation will highlight how Theodosius II was portrayed to a Western audience fourteen years after his pre-eminent image over Valentinian III was established.

#### *The Edict of 429 and its Companion in 435*

The first edict analysed here was presented to the Senate at Constantinople on the 26<sup>th</sup> of March 429. It outlined the form, function, and purpose of the Code, its name, who would compile it and where it would be valid.<sup>461</sup> Through this edict, we see the presentation of Eastern dominance over this mammoth task and Theodosius II's ongoing seniority over his Western colleague. The first, and perhaps most obvious, indication that suggests this is the name of the Codex itself. As numerous scholars have emphasised, its name was not a modern title, but one given to the work in antiquity: 'this code...shall be called by Our name.'<sup>462</sup> There was no mention of Valentinian III here, nor any indication that his name would also be attributed to

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<sup>458</sup> The act of codification is not of interest here, only the portrayed relationship between the Eastern and Western emperors.

<sup>459</sup> Harries 1992: 40-41.

<sup>460</sup> Barnish et al. 2001: 165-166; Gillett 1993: 20-21; Harries 1992: 44; Harries 1999: 22-23; Honoré 1998: 97; Matthews 1993: 19-21; Matthews 2000: 6; McEvoy 2010: 175; McEvoy 2014: 253; Millar 2006: 58.

<sup>461</sup> CTh 1.1.5; Matthews 1993: 22-23.

<sup>462</sup> CTh. 1.1.5. ...*hic...codicibus...qui nostro nomine nuncuptaus...* Gillett 1993: 21; Honoré 1998: 125; McEvoy 2014: 253.

the Codex. Moreover, though the beginning of this edict proclaimed that both emperors ordered the formation of this code, we cannot assume that the then ten-year-old Valentinian III was actively involved in the initial process of codification. Therefore, the youth of the Western emperor, coupled with the naming of the Code after Theodosius II suggests that the Edict of 429 continued to perpetuate the image portrayed on other centrally controlled media – a pre-eminent Eastern emperor and a dominant East.

Despite the youth of Valentinian III, Western officials theoretically could have been involved in the codification efforts. However, the Edict of 429 confirms that this was not the case as all nine men selected by Theodosius II to begin the Code's composition were officials from the Eastern government.<sup>463</sup> However, this does not suggest that the West was completely removed from its formation. Numerous scholars have shown that the Code comprised of laws from the whole Empire, indicating a high level of co-operation between the Eastern compilers and Western archivists.<sup>464</sup> As such, the only identifiable contribution Western officials made to the Codex was in the collation of past legal texts scattered throughout Western cities. Therefore, from its inception they were not involved in the official formation nor organisation of the legal text that would be utilised, according to this edict, throughout their Empire.<sup>465</sup> This lack of Western representation ensured that the East was credited entirely with this achievement, and further promoted Theodosius II's powerful position over both halves of the Empire in 429.

The portrayal of Theodosius II's seniority over Valentinian III and the West was not the sole purpose of this task. Outlined in the final paragraph of the edict, another major purpose behind the law's codification was promoting the image of unity and co-operation between the twin Empires. When discussing the role of this future code, the edict described the East and West as a 'very closely united Empire.'<sup>466</sup> Produced only five years after the establishment of this image in 424, the Edict of 429 shows the ongoing effort within the Eastern Theodosian regime to reinforce the perception of one united Empire. However, though unity between the two

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<sup>463</sup> CTh 1.1.5. *Antiochum virum inlustrem, exquaestore et praefectum elegimus, Antiochum virum inlustrem quaestorem sacri palatii, Theodorum v(irum) s(pectabilem) com(item) et magistrum memoriae, Eudicium et Eusebium v(iros) s(pectabiles) magistros scriniorum, Iohannem v(irum) s(pectabilem ex com(ite) nostri sacrarii, Comazontem atque Eubulum v(iros) s(pectabiles) ex magistris scriniorum et Apellem virum disertissimum scholasticum.* Matthews 2000: 58; Millar 2006: 56.

<sup>464</sup> Gillett 1993: 21-22; Honoré 1998: 140-141; McEvoy 2013: 258; McEvoy 2014: 253; Millar 2006: 56.

<sup>465</sup> CTh 1.1.5; *Gesta* 4. Honoré 1998: 129; Millar 2006: 57.

<sup>466</sup> CTh. 1.1.5: *...coniunctissimi...imperii...*



Empires was emphasised, this final paragraph implicitly implied that the East, under the rule of Theodosius II, was the senior and leading figure over this Empire. It states that upon imperial consent laws produced in one-half of the Empire would be valid in the other.<sup>467</sup> Though this might imply a relatively equal relationship between the two, it is important to remember that this edict was presented only to the Senate at Constantinople, presumably without ten-year-old Valentinian III's input or consent. As such, the final paragraph of the 429 Edict asserted Theodosius II's legal dominance over both halves of the Roman Empire to his Eastern audience.

In December 435, six years after the initial commission was established, a second edict was issued at Constantinople. Similar to its predecessor, this edict highlighted the design and layout of what was then officially termed the *Codex Theodosianus* (Theodosian Code).<sup>468</sup> As Matthews has argued, this edict both reiterated and redefined the principles of the Code's initial formation outlined in 429. He suggested, perhaps correctly, that this edict, which was not read in Rome, marks a specific point in the editorial process – the collection of laws was now complete and the organisation and editing of the material could begin.<sup>469</sup> By reiterating and redefining numerous aspects in this second edict six years after its initiation, the regime publicly reconfirmed Theodosius II's position over his Western colleague to an Eastern audience. This ongoing Eastern monopoly over the affair is evident once again through the omission of Western officials in the final formulation of the Code, and the lack of Valentinian III's name in the edict.<sup>470</sup> Moreover, the most persuasive indication that this edict was intended to re-assert Eastern dominance to an Eastern audience is its omission from the Minutes of the Senate at Rome. Therefore, the Edict of 435 demonstrates the ongoing Eastern portrayal of Theodosius II as the senior emperor over the then sixteen-year-old Valentinian III.

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<sup>467</sup> CTh. 1.1.5: *in futurum autem si quid promulgari placuerit, ita in coniunctissimi parte alia valebit imperii, ut non fide dubia nec privata adsertione nitatur, sed ex qua parte fuerit constitutum, cum sacris transmittatur adfatibus in alterius quoque recipiendum scriniis et cum edictorum sollemnitate vulgandum.*

<sup>468</sup> CTh 1.1.6.2: *...huius theodosiani codicis...*

<sup>469</sup> Matthews 1993: 25; Matthews 2000: 59-61.

<sup>470</sup> CTh. 1.1.6.6. *Antiochus amplissimus adque gloriosissim[us] praefectorius ac consularis; Eubulus inlustris ac magnificus comes et quaestor noster; Maximinus v(ir) i(n)lustris insignibus quaestoriae dignitatis ornatus; Sperantius, Martyrius, Alypius, Sebastianus, Apollodorus, Theodorus, Eron spe[c]tabiles comites consistoriani; Maximinus, Epigenes, Diodorus, Procopius spectabiles comites et magistri sacr[o]rum scriniorum; Erotius v(ir) s(p)ectabilis ex vicariis iuris doctor; Neoterius v(ir) spectabilis ex...* Matthews 2000: 59.

### *The Minutes from the Roman Senate*

Two years later, in October 437, two advanced copies of the Code were handed over to selected dignitaries from both empires.<sup>471</sup> Receiving the Code shortly after the nuptials of Valentinian III and Licinia Eudoxia were the Eastern Praetorian Prefect, Darius, and the three time Prefect of Rome, Anicius Acilius Glabrio Faustus.<sup>472</sup> As many scholars have noted, the Eastern regime utilised this event to once again publicly demonstrate Theodosius II's seniority over Valentinian III and promote the 'political supremacy of the Eastern court.'<sup>473</sup> That the wedding was utilised to reinforce Theodosius II's position is suggested through the delay in the official ratification of the Code and its dispersal throughout the Empire. In the East, the Code was ratified in February 438 and in the West by January the following year.<sup>474</sup> As we saw in the previous case study, the power, prominence and influence of Theodosius II was continuously emphasised during the wedding of Valentinian III and Licinia Eudoxia. Therefore, the ceremonial promulgation of this Code in Constantinople essentially legalised Theodosius II's pre-eminent position over his now son-in-law. In order to explore how the Eastern emperor was portrayed after the legalisation of his position as Valentinian III's father, this final section will analyse the speech given by Faustus to the Roman Senate.

As I have stated, the Western dignitary who received the Theodosian Code was the prominent official, Anicius Acilius Glabrio Faustus, who was by 438 'thrice Ex-Prefect of the City, Praetorian Prefect, and Consul Ordinary.'<sup>475</sup> However, when he was selected Faustus only had the title of Ex-Prefect of the City. Whilst in the East, he was made Praetorian Prefect on the order of both Valentinian III and Theodosius II, and designated consul for the following year alongside Theodosius II.<sup>476</sup> That the Eastern emperor would have any say in the election of a Western official in 437 is indicative of his power at this time.<sup>477</sup> Though after Valentinian III's initial installation some Eastern officials stayed in the West to support the new government, by

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<sup>471</sup> Harries 1999: 23; Honoré 1998: 126; Matthews 1993: 20-21; Matthews 2000: 22; Millar 2006: 58.

<sup>472</sup> *Gesta* 1, 3.

<sup>473</sup> Quote from Harries 1993: 16. Also see: Harries 1999: 37; Honoré 1998: 124; McEvoy 2014: 257; Millar 2006: 58.

<sup>474</sup> NTh. 1.5, 6; Harries 1993: 5; Honoré 1998: 132; Matthews 1993: 20; Matthews 2000: 30.

<sup>475</sup> *Gesta* 1. ...*Anicius Achillius Glabrio Faustus v. c. et in(l)ustris, tertio exprefecto urbi, praefectus praetorio et consul ordinarius*... Matthews 2000: 1.

<sup>476</sup> Honoré 1998: 126; Matthews 1993: 21.

<sup>477</sup> Similar to Theodosius I's actions between 388 and 391 when he resided in Milan. During his time in the West, the Eastern emperor appointed numerous officials on behalf of the Western emperor, Valentinian II. See CTh 16.5.15; CTh 15.14.8 for Theodosius I's Western appointments. For more on this earlier precedent see, Matthews 1975: 226; McEvoy 2013: 93-94.

the end of the 420s these officials had returned to Constantinople.<sup>478</sup> Therefore, through this act it would be correct to assume that Faustus' selection was greatly influenced by the East.<sup>479</sup> This conclusion is further supported by the fact that this is not the first time Faustus' name has been mentioned in this chapter. Recalling the first case study examined above, the City Prefect was mentioned on the surviving inscription at Rome that proclaimed the city's support for their new young Caesar. Moreover, as he was City Prefect at the time of Valentinian III's investiture in 425, he was in close contact with Eastern officials and perhaps collaborated with them in preparation for the accession ceremonial.<sup>480</sup> Faustus, therefore, had experience in not only witnessing an Eastern ceremonial, but also operating under one. As such, his speech to the Roman senate provides an insight into how Theodosius II's Eastern portrayal was translated within a Western context.

Due to the length of Faustus' speech, only two extant sections will be quoted and analysed below.<sup>481</sup> In the opening paragraph of Faustus' speech, the dignitary states:

The felicity that emanates from our immortal Emperors proceeds in its increase to the point that it arrays with ornaments of peace those whom it defends in the fortunes of war. Last year when I attended, as a mark of devotion, the most felicitous union of all the sacred ceremonies, after the nuptials had been felicitously solemnised, the most sacred Emperor, Our Lord Theodosius, desired to add the following high honour also to His world, namely, that He should order to be established the regulations that must be observed throughout the world, in accordance with the precepts of the laws which had been gathered together in a compendium of sixteen books, and these books he had desired to be consecrated by His most sacred name. The immortal Emperor, Our Lord Valentinian [III], with the loyalty of a colleague and the affection of a son, approved this undertaking.<sup>482</sup>

Through reading this opening passage, two things become immediately clear: the Eastern influences imbedded within the text, and the pre-eminent position of Theodosius II. The speech

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<sup>478</sup> Discussed above.

<sup>479</sup> The speech given by Faustus to the Roman senators was also given at his home in Rome, further suggesting his important link between the East and West. Matthews 2000: 32-34.

<sup>480</sup> Matthews 2000: 4.

<sup>481</sup> Regarding the Edict of 429 analysed above, the *Gesta Senatus Romani* does indicate that the Western official read the Edict. Therefore, as the content of this edict was not altered and Theodosius II's portrayal remained the same, a second analysis is not needed.

<sup>482</sup> *Gesta 2. Aeternorum principum felicitas eo usque procedit augmento, ut ornamentis pacis instruat, quos bellorum sorte defendit. Proximo superiore anno cum felicissimam sacrorum omnium coniunctionem pro devotione comitarer, peractis feliciter nuptiis hanc quoque orbi suo sacratissimus princeps dominus noster Theodosius adicere voluit dignitatem, ut in unum collectis legum praeceptionibus sequenda per orbem sedecim librorum compendio, quos sacratissimo suo nomine voluit consecrari, constitui iuberet. Quam rem aeternus princeps dominus noster Valentinianus devotione socii, affectu filii conprobavit.*

opened with a pompous, but traditional, description of the two emperors as the protectors of peace throughout the Empire. Though following a traditional literary pattern, the connection between Eastern involvements in Western military affairs since 424 would not have been lost on Faustus' audience.<sup>483</sup> Therefore, its inclusion here served as a reminder to those in Rome of the East's continual military support of their Western counterparts and thus, of Theodosius II's ongoing involvement in Western affairs. Though the opening sentence of Faustus' speech only implied Theodosius II's seniority, the remainder of the passage plainly stated his elevated position as Faustus only mentioned the Eastern emperor as the producer of this Code. Though this was the message promulgated in the East since 429, that it was portrayed with equal fervour in the West suggests the overall prominent perception of Theodosius II in both Empires by 438.

After the wedding of his daughter and Valentinian III, Faustus proclaimed, Theodosius II desired to add another high honour to 'His world.' Numerous components of this statement are worth unpacking. Firstly, Theodosius II was credited for the marriage of Licinia Eudoxia and Valentinian III, the ceremony in which Faustus attended.<sup>484</sup> Though this presentation of the Eastern emperor has already been analysed above, it is worth restating here as Faustus proclaimed this view of Theodosius II to a Western audience. Secondly, nowhere throughout this second sentence was Valentinian III named – in relation to either his marriage or his contribution to the Code.<sup>485</sup> Therefore, not only was the wedding attributed solely to Theodosius II, but the compilation of the Code as well. This is vastly different to the initial presentation of the two emperors in the Edict of 429, in which the language was more diplomatic and credited the young Western emperor alongside Theodosius II in its formation.<sup>486</sup> Finally, the Eastern emperor's overall seniority is plainly showed in the two words: 'His world.' Though this, of course, could only imply the Eastern half of the Empire, I would argue that it is more likely, considering how Theodosius II had been portrayed up until this point in Faustus' speech, that the Western official considered 'His world' to be the entire Roman Empire. Moreover, the earlier edicts proclaimed that the Code was intended for both parts of this 'very closely united Empire.'<sup>487</sup> Therefore, this opening passage suggests that after

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<sup>483</sup> See above for more details on Vandal invasion in early 430s. In addition, the rhetoric continued in NVal. 9. *...atque invictissimi principis Theodosii patris nostri iam propinquet exercitus...* for Theodosius II and the East sending military aid to the West after the Vandals occupied Carthage and sailed to Sicily. Millar 2006: 58-59.

<sup>484</sup> Millar 2006: 58

<sup>485</sup> Contribution only as he was the ruling Western emperor.

<sup>486</sup> CTh 1.1.5 followed normal legal terminology that included both emperors, even though it was issued in one-half of the Empire.

<sup>487</sup> CTh 1.1.5: *...coniunctissimi...imperii...*

witnessing the events in Constantinople in 437, Faustus, in conjunction with the long-held Eastern presentation of their emperor, considered both the Eastern and Western halves of Empire to be under the headship of the senior Augustus, Theodosius II.

This portrayal can also be linked to the emperor's initial presentation after the death of Honorius. We saw in the first case study examined that the months between Honorius' death and Valentinian III's accession to Caesar, Theodosius II legislated on behalf of the whole Empire. Moreover, it was shown in the earlier analysis that Valentinian III's accession in 424 to Caesar was done to portray him as the legitimate heir to the Western half of Theodosius II's Empire after the usurpation of John. Therefore, that Faustus in 438 continued to perpetuate the image of a single Empire ruled primarily under the senior authority of Theodosius II with the support of his legitimate heir reinforces these earlier conclusions. Furthermore, it suggests that this imagery did not cease with Valentinian III's installation in 425, or when he grew into adulthood, but was reinforced continually throughout these years.

In the second half of this passage, Faustus provided an abridged version of the Edict of 429 to explain the compilation and formation of the Code. He claimed that Theodosius II wanted to bring order to the legal world that would be followed throughout the Empire. Once again, Valentinian III was omitted, Theodosius II was granted all the credit, and solely associated with ruling the united Empire. Therefore, not only does the Eastern emperor bring peace through his military efforts to the world, but order as well. Finally, the only time throughout the entire speech where Valentinian III was mentioned by name, his junior position was highlighted. Faustus stated that 'with the loyalty of a colleague and affection of a son, Valentinian [III] approved the undertaking.'<sup>488</sup> In this line, Theodosius II's position as senior emperor and father of Valentinian III was plainly shown. Moreover, that the Western emperor's permission was sought only after the fact indicates not only his lack of involvement, but also the lack of Western representation in the codification. However, despite this, the line stated that the Western emperor supported his new legal father, as a respectful son and imperial colleague should.

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<sup>488</sup> *Gesta* 2. *Quam rem aeternus princeps dominus noster Valentinianus devotione socii, affectu filii conprobavit.* McEvoy 2013: 258.

After Faustus finished this first speech, and the assembly replied with proper acclamations, his second speech began:

Therefore, the most sacred Emperor summoned me and the Illustrious man who was Prefect of the Orient at that time, and ordered copies of the Code to be delivered from his own divine hand, one to each of us, in order that they might be dispatched throughout the world with all due reverence. Thus it was among the first of His provisions that His forethought should be brought to the knowledge of Your Sublimity. The Code as directed by the order of both Emperors was received into our hands. The constitutionaries are present. If it please Your Magnificence, let you Magnificence order that those very laws be read to you by which They ordered that this undertaking should be performed, in order that we may obey with proper devotion the most carefully considered precepts of the immortal Emperors.<sup>489</sup>

The first sentence of this speech continued the rhetoric of Theodosius II's pre-eminence over Valentinian III and his sole role in organising the Codex. Faustus explained that he was selected by the Eastern emperor himself to travel to Constantinople to receive the Code. As a Western official, his selection by the East might be somewhat surprising. However, as I explained above, Faustus had previously interacted with many Eastern officials during their time in Rome in 425 and had been personally involved in an Eastern ceremonial event. As such, he had some interaction with the Eastern court, and would be the perfect Western representative for this Eastern ceremonial. Moreover, as with the previous speech, Valentinian III is again noticeably absent during the Code's promulgation ceremony. The Eastern emperor not only ordered and delivered these advanced copies to Faustus and Darius, but also urged them to spread the Code throughout the world. More than this, it was only through Theodosius II's foresight that knowledge of the Code should be brought to Rome. Therefore, the Eastern emperor completely bypassed his Western colleague and interacted, though an intermediary, with the Roman Senate himself. Throughout all of this, Faustus described Theodosius II as the more senior and pre-eminent emperor over his Western colleague. His description here correlated with his portrayal on official Eastern media and within Eastern sources. Therefore, that Faustus originated from the West, yet produced a speech that highlighted Theodosius II's portrayal as Valentinian III's father and pre-eminent emperor suggests that this presentation was not confined to Constantinople and the East, but was universal.

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<sup>489</sup> *Gesta* 3. *Vocatis igitur me et in(ustri) viro illius temporis Orientis praefecto singulos codices sua nobis manu divina tradi iussit per orbem sui cum reverentia dirigendos, ita ut inter prima vestrae sublimitatis notioni provisionem suam sacratissimus princeps iuberet offerri. In manu est acceptus codex utriusque principis praeceptione directus. Constitutionarii praesentes sunt: si placet amplitudini vestrae, has ipsas leges, quibus hoc idem fieri iusserunt, amplitudo vestra relegi sibi iubeat, ut consultissimis aeternorum principum praeceptis consentanea devotione pareamus.*

The second half of this speech followed a more traditional outline and dealt with the emperors collectively. Therefore, I would suggest that this was mere formality on Faustus' part and following a formal legal component in order to ratify the Code. The earlier two sections of this speech, however, were an indication of his own thoughts on the event and his interpretation of the relationship between the two emperors. What is most interesting about his speech is the overt and ostentatious praise of Theodosius II and almost complete omission of the Western emperor. The latter's exclusion from the account perhaps reflected, as McEvoy has argued, Valentinian III's own absence from the proceedings.<sup>490</sup> Though she stated that this was not the first time in which an emperor was reportedly absent from a senatorial meeting, the opportunity the promulgation of the Code offered the now adult and newly married Valentinian III to assert his position was clearly missed.<sup>491</sup> With this in mind, it is also quite possible that Faustus' speech reflected a level of disappointment in their own leader. Therefore, this speech clearly shows not only the prominence of Theodosius II's presentation, which has been analysed throughout this chapter, but also its seemingly universal acceptance in both halves of the Roman Empire.

## 6.1 Conclusion

Through the analysis of key moments that occurred between 423 and 438, this chapter has shown the developing portrayal of Theodosius II's public image in relation to Valentinian III and the West. Case study one examined the events leading up to and immediately following the installation of Theodosius II's young cousin, Valentinian III, as Western Roman Emperor. The analysis of imperial coinage minted in Constantinople and with travelling Western court highlighted the senior and pre-eminent position of Theodosius II over his young colleague from the very outset of their official public relationship. Through this portrayal, and the progressive elevation of Valentinian III to Augustus, the East firmly established their elevated position over the West. By comparing the portrayal of Theodosius II and Valentinian III on official media produced by the regime with Eastern literary sources, this case study showed the consistent representation of Theodosius II. Therefore, the air of Eastern triumphalism presented in literary accounts accurately reflected the contemporary portrayal of Theodosius II in Constantinople and the East.

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<sup>490</sup> McEvoy 2013: 258-259.

<sup>491</sup> Zos. 5.29.5-5.30.3 stated that Honorius was absent from an important senate meeting even though he was in residence at Rome. McEvoy 2013: 178, 258-259.

Case study two investigated the development of this image that coincided with Valentinian III's growth into adulthood and the establishment of influential members of his court. Therefore, the marriage between Licinia Eudoxia and Valentinian III enabled the Eastern regime to develop Theodosius II's relationship with the Western emperor from a guiding figure into his father. Moreover, the marriage between the Eastern princess and Valentinian III was an ostentatious presentation of co-operation between the two courts and signified the unification of the twin Empires. The gold *solidus* minted in celebration of this occasion further portrayed Theodosius II in a more eminent position and highlighted his role in facilitating the Empire's 'reunification'. Once again, the portrayal of the relationship between the two emperors on official media correlated to Socrates' presentation of the event. In his account, the Eastern author not only displayed Theodosius II's role in establishing Valentinian III's position as Western emperor, but also presented his new position as his father.

The final case study analysed the Edict of 429 and its companion of 435 and found once more the image of Theodosius II's pre-eminence and Eastern superiority in official media. The Code was compiled in the East, by a committee of Eastern officials, and named solely after the Eastern emperor. However, throughout the examination of these two edicts, this investigation highlighted the image of unity through the description of the East and West as a 'very closely united Empire.' That this description appeared before the wedding of Licinia Eudoxia and Valentinian III indicates a long-term commitment in perpetuating this image of unity between the twin Empires. Finally, the speech given by the Western official, Anicius Acilius Glabrio Faustus, to Roman senators in 438 displays how Theodosius II's presentation was interpreted outside Constantinople and the East. Through this analysis, it was shown that Faustus' portrayal of the relationship between Theodosius II and Valentinian III closely correlated with the official image promulgated from the East. Importantly, this speech revealed that the Western official saw the two Empires as Theodosius II's world and Valentinian III as his devoted son.

Overall, this chapter has shown the heightened level in which the image of unity and co-operation between the twin Empires was perpetuated from the Eastern Theodosian court during the reign of Theodosius II and Valentinian III. Through the analysis of official media, such as imperial coinage, edicts, and speeches, this chapter was able to explore the contemporary portrayal of Theodosius II during key moments when he interacted with the West. Then, by comparing this image to his literary presentation, this analysis outlined the consistent



representation of the two emperors during these events. Therefore, this chapter has shown that throughout the events, which ranged from 423 until 438, Theodosius II was portrayed as the pre-eminent emperor and the protector of a unified Empire.

## Conclusion

Theodosius II was the fifth consecutive child-emperor to rule the Roman world, and his accession to full Augustus in 408 occurred under the unparalleled circumstances of a young emperor ruling without any adult familial support. He spent the majority of his life in the newly established Eastern imperial capital, Constantinople, which had been the consistent home to the Theodosian family for almost three decades prior to Theodosius II's reign – an unprecedented feat for any fourth century imperial city. As a result of this long-term imperial presence, the support of the Constantinopolitan citizenry had become an important component in the stability of an Eastern emperor's reign. The progressively sedentary nature of imperial rule in the East and the successive elevation of child-emperors in the later fourth century necessitated the development of a new form of leadership and imperial presentation. As such, imperial capitals and their citizenry, rather than the battlefield and the army, became important arenas for these emperors, with imperial piety often emphasised to neutralise some shortcomings associated with minority rule.

This thesis analysed key aspects of the public image of the Eastern Theodosian family on centrally controlled media, such as coins and inscriptions, as well as within literary sources to explore the initial adaptation of Theodosius II's image and trace its ongoing development. It concluded, through the examination of three case studies, that the public image of Theodosius II was founded on ostentatious displays of imperial piety and the presentation of unity that included all the members of the Eastern Theodosian family. After establishing the adapted imperial image, this investigation then analysed its promulgation through imperial ceremonials in Constantinople, and finally highlighted the emperor's portrayal on coinage and in contemporary literary sources in connection with the West.

Chapter One focused on the imperial image of the Eastern Theodosian family from Theodosius II's accession to co-Augustus in 402 until his death in 450. The first section of this chapter assessed the vow of virginity undertaken by Theodosius II's young sisters in January 414 and argued that this act enabled the wider regime to promote a new image of an ostentatiously pious imperial family. Though imperial piety was a key component for any child-emperor, the level to which it was emphasised for Theodosius II's reign and the collective role of his entire family in its presentation suggest that the traditional image was further developed at this time. This section also examined a fragmentary base inscription erected at the Hebdomon by the central

regime. Through the comparative analysis of this inscription and the accounts of the contemporary ecclesiastical historians, Socrates and Sozomen, this section highlighted the primary importance of familial unity and piety in the imperial image.

Section two of this chapter focused on the early relationship between Theodosius II and his eldest sister, Pulcheria, who was elevated to the rank of Augusta in July 414. By comparing Pulcheria's portrayal on imperial coins minted within Constantinople with those produced on behalf of her dynastic predecessors, Aelia Flaccilla and Eudoxia, this section proposed that the young princess was elevated at this time so she and Theodosius II could be presented as an imperial couple. Through the examination of earlier imperial couples, primarily Theodosius I and Aelia Flaccilla, and Arcadius and Eudoxia, this section suggested that the image of a ruling pair was a necessary presentation in Constantinople despite the youth of their new emperor and his family. As such, Pulcheria's elevation at the young age of fifteen further indicated that the regime adapted the traditional imperial image to compensate for the shortcomings associated with child-rule. Moreover, this section offered a reassessment of the empress' depiction in literary sources, in which she was described as a controlling figure, and suggested that the relationship between the brother-sister pair, which often involved public acts of piety, was mutually beneficial and dominated by neither member.

The first two sections of this chapter established the adaptation of the imperial image highlighted through the sisters' communal vow of virginity and Pulcheria's elevation to Augusta. Section three and section four examined the progressive development of this image through the assessment of four key events: the marriage between Theodosius II and Eudocia in 421; Eudocia's elevation to Augusta in 423; Pulcheria's retirement to the Hebdomon in 439; and Eudocia's permanent removal to the Holy Land in 441. Through the analysis of these events, these two sections highlighted how the imperial image was modified to align first with the growth of the imperial family, and then with the absence of the two Augustae from court life. Section three argued that Eudocia's need for a baptism prior to her marriage to Theodosius II aided in the public perception of Eastern Theodosian piety. Then, it showed how the relationship between the emperor, his wife and his sister, was received in the later literature. This section suggested that after Theodosius II's marriage the portrayal of Pulcheria was developed from the emperor's female counterpart into a more motherly figure. Section three then assessed the contemporary numismatic evidence to consider how the imperial image was adapted to capitalise on Eudocia's elevation to Augusta in 423. Through the uniform depiction

of the three imperial figures on coinage, this section argued that the image of a cohesive imperial unit was propagated by the regime.

The final section examined two events that had the potential to destabilise the image of unity between this imperial unit – the withdrawals of Pulcheria and Eudocia from Theodosius II's court. However, through the lack of any definitive evidence suggesting a contemporary scandal and the ongoing production of both Pulcheria and Eudocia's coin types by the imperial mint, this section suggested that their retirements from court life was successfully manipulated by the regime to benefit the imperial image. Eudocia's permanent removal to the Holy Land, her second over a four-year period, enabled the empress to be associated with Helena, the mother of Constantine and the epitome of a virtuous Christian woman. Pulcheria moved to the Hebdomon, a place where her pious image was associated with the Empire's security. Although some physical separation between the emperor and his two Augustae did occur at this time, the fact that neither woman was removed from the official image of the regime suggests that their lives in retirement were presented as beneficial acts by the regime. Overall, Chapter One showed how the Eastern Theodosian regime adapted the traditional presentation of an imperial family to suit the situation in Constantinople after Theodosius II's full accession to Augustus in 408. It highlighted the central role of ostentatious piety and the presentation of familial unity in this new image. Finally, this chapter assessed the long-term presentation of this image and argued that it was not static but developed alongside the emperor and his family.

Though it is near impossible to determine the level of personal involvement in the development of the Eastern imperial image, the four case studies examined in Chapter Two provided the clearest indication to suggest Theodosius II was an active participant in communicating key components of his image to the people of Constantinople. Though it dealt primarily with positive events, this chapter also analysed the only negative reported interaction between Theodosius II and his people to show that the emperor was not always successful during these occasions. Through the assessment of the four positive examples, this chapter outlined moments when the emperor modified, or reinvented actions traditionally associated with specific ceremonial events and highlighted his ability in adapting imperial behaviour to ensure he remained the central figure. Case study one, which was documented in Socrates' history, portrayed Theodosius II as a quick-thinking emperor when a violent storm threatened the safety of the spectators at the Hippodrome in Constantinople. Chronologically positioned to the early 420s, this event contained numerous traditional elements, such as the emperor holding games

and attending them, as well as elements of adapted imperial behaviour. It described the first instance in which Theodosius II displayed imperial humility to the residents of his city. Although he was not the first Theodosian imperial member to perform this Christian virtue, he was the first known to do so within a secular context. Most importantly, the examination of this example emphasised the connection between the piety of the emperor and the safety of his people.

This theme was not confined to the first case study but also underlined the second event analysed in this chapter. Once again attested in Socrates' history and definitively dated to 425, this example recounted the military victory celebrated in Constantinople after the Eastern defeat of the Western usurper, John. It suggested that the commencement of this triumph, which occurred in the Hippodrome rather than at the traditional location at the Hebdomon, allowed the emperor to adapt the message communicated to his people. The relocation of this event to a civilian arena, rather than the traditional military space, clearly showed the importance of the emperor's relationship with the civilian population of the city. Moreover, it argued that the conclusion of this triumphal procession, at the Church of Constantinople, provided the emperor with an opportunity to associate his piety to the Empire's security. Therefore, the examination of this example demonstrated a connection between Theodosius II's reported behaviour in imperial ceremonial and the presentation of the imperial family on the victory inscription placed at the Hebdomon. Finally, there were some notable similarities in the emperor's behaviour in the two examples described in Socrates' history: Theodosius II reportedly joined his people and sang hymns alongside them, which was followed in each case by the description of the city as a united people. The former similarity further indicates the ingenuity of Theodosius II in incorporating religious elements into secular ceremonies, while the latter closely corresponds to the important presentation of familial unity in the imperial image. Therefore, these two examples highlighted the progressive development of imperial ceremonies in the Hippodrome at Constantinople, and Theodosius II's active role in communicating important aspects of his imperial image to his citizenry.

The final two positive events discussed the emperor's engagement with his subjects during imperial processions through Constantinople. Case study three, which survived in both contemporary and later accounts, examined the reinterment of the body of John Chrysostom in 438. Through the analysis of Theodoret's account, this example highlighted the emperor's ability to react to a situation and adapt his behaviour to ensure he remained the central figure

on the ceremonial stage. Theophanes' account of the same event, which focused on the procession through the city, highlighted the long-term reception of the portrayal of the public relationship between Theodosius II and Pulcheria, as the latter was included in this event. Moreover, though the two accounts differed in their focus, they both detailed how Theodosius II's decision to return the body of John Chrysostom into the capital reunited those who had separated from the Church. Finally, the fourth case study analysed in this chapter also contained the description of citywide unity, as shown through the explicit statement that the senate, people and clergy were brought together through the actions of the emperor. This example, which examined the 'piety walk' undertaken by Theodosius II after an earthquake had destroyed parts of the city in 447, was the most significant in its display of imperial humility and piety and in highlighting the ingenuity of the emperor. Commencing his barefoot walk at the Great Palace and finishing at the Hebdomon, Theodosius II's actions reinforced the connection between imperial piety and the Empire's security, shown not only through the emperor's behaviour, but also through the victory monument at the Hebdomon and Pulcheria's presence in the region. Moreover, as the 'piety walk' only survived in later accounts, this event contributed to the consistently positive reception of Theodosius II's public behaviour in later Byzantine sources. Overall, this chapter showed that the reported behaviour of Theodosius II during ceremonial events in Constantinople reflected numerous aspects of the new Eastern Theodosian public image. Therefore, through this connection and evidence indicating the emperor's own initiative in adapting events to highlight this image, this chapter argued that Theodosius II was an active participant in his imperial presentation.

Chapter three focused on Theodosius II's portrayal in Eastern sources during key moments when he intervened in affairs in the Western Roman Empire. Three primary examples, dating from 423 until 438, were analysed to explore the development of Theodosius II's presentation in this arena and its progressive transformation over time. The first example examined the events leading up to and immediately following the installation of Valentinian III as Western Roman Emperor in 425. This analysis showed that following the death of Honorius in 423 and the usurpation of John soon after, the Eastern regime promoted an image of unity between the Eastern and Western branches of the Theodosian house. However, through the assessment of imperial coinage contemporary to these events, this case study also showed that the Eastern regime clearly portrayed Theodosius II as the senior guiding figure over his young cousin. That these coins, which always presented Valentinian III as a diminutive figure alongside his Eastern colleague, were minted in Constantinople as well as with the travelling retinue of the Western

court, suggests that this image was not confined to Constantinople and the East but was intended for the entire Empire. Moreover, through the examination of key ceremonial events and elevations, it also argued that the presentation of the Western imperial family was modelled on its Eastern counterpart. It was suggested that through the elevation of the child Honoria to the rank of Augusta, she and her younger brother could portray an image of an imperial couple – similar to Theodosius II and Pulcheria between 414 and 421. Moreover, through the equal rank of Valentinian III, Galla Placidia and Honoria, this family could be portrayed as an imperial unit – comparable to the image of Theodosius II, Pulcheria and Eudocia successfully established in the East in 423. Through these events, the Eastern regime was able to present an image of Eastern superiority, led by their emperor, Theodosius II.

The second example examined the development of Theodosius II's public presentation through the marriage of his daughter, Licinia Eudoxia, to Valentinian III in 437. By analysing the gold *solidus* minted at Constantinople in commemoration of this event and Socrates' contemporary account, this example highlighted the ongoing presentation of Theodosius II as the more prominent and influential member of the imperial colleague. The *solidus* in particular presented an image of the Eastern emperor facilitating the symbolic reunification of the twin Empires through the marriage of his daughter to the Western emperor. The third example discussed the presentation of Theodosius II in the Edict of 429, which announced the formation of a codification committee, and a speech given by the Western official, Anicius Acilius Glabrio Faustus, to Roman senators in 438 to ratify the completed *Codex Theodosianus*. This analysis argued that the image of Eastern superiority and Theodosius II's pre-eminence over the West was promoted in the Edict of 429, issued by the Eastern regime in Constantinople. It found that similar to Theodosius II's presentation during the wedding of his daughter, this edict encouraged the perception of a 'very closely united Empire' brought together through the actions of the Eastern emperor. The speech of Anicius Acilius Glabrio Faustus was then analysed to consider Theodosius II's presentation within a Western context (and by a Western official) during the ratification of the Code at Rome. It found that Faustus' speech reinforced the presentation of Theodosius II in Eastern sources, and at numerous times outlined the Eastern emperor's pre-eminent position over Valentinian III. This speech also continued on the rhetoric of a unified Empire; however, as Faustus portrayed, it was Theodosius II's world. Overall, this chapter demonstrated that Theodosius II was presented not only as an influential figure over his younger cousin, but also as the unifier and protector of the twin Empires. Through the examination of these key events of the Eastern government's interventions in the

West in the 420s and 430s, this chapter outlined the consistent portrayal of Theodosius II as a unifier and protector.

This thesis explored throughout its three case studies the progressive transformation of the public image of the Eastern Theodosian family, the public nature of Theodosius II's reign, and the correlation between his presentation on centrally controlled media and his behaviour during imperial ceremonies in Constantinople. By comparing the official imperial portrayal on coinage and the inscription at the Hebdomon to the literary depictions of the ruling family, this thesis argued that the regime of Theodosius II developed a clear and consistent message that was reflected in contemporary media. It suggested that the presentation of ostentatious piety and the portrayal of familial unity were key components in the new public image of this young family. Moreover, through the examination of Theodosius II's reported actions during imperial ceremonial in Constantinople, this thesis argued that numerous modifications were made to these events to highlight the emperor's piety and leadership. This suggests the emperor was more actively involved in shaping his public presentation than many scholars have previously assumed. Finally, the investigation of Theodosius II's portrayal on official coinage produced by the Eastern regime highlighted his consistent representation as the pre-eminent figure over his young cousin, Valentinian III. Therefore, this analysis has shown that the portrayal of Eastern triumphalism in the literary sources was an accurate interpretation of the official image produced by the central regime in Constantinople. Overall, this thesis argued that there was uniformity in the public presentation of the Eastern Theodosian family in both official media and literary sources. By comparing these primary pieces of evidence, this study has shown how the image of the ruling family was adapted and developed over the course of Theodosius II's reign and contributed to its stability and longevity.



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