

CLAUDIAN'S INVECTIVE AGAINST EUTROPIUS AS A CONTEMPORARY HISTORICAL DOCUMENT

In the years 395 - 404 Claudian, poet at the West Roman court of Honorius, wrote numerous political poems for the benefit of Stilicho, who was practically the ruler of the Western Empire. Among these poems there is an invective against Eutropius, the ruler of the Eastern Empire since Rufinus' death on November 27, 395. Two important interpreters of Claudian's invective deserve special recognition: In 1970 Cameron¹ interpreted the poem as an instrument of Stilicho's politics. In 1976 Gnilka², in an excellent essay concentrated on Cameron's ideas, showed that the poem not only serves as propaganda for Stilicho, but moreover documents the alienation of West Rome from Byzantium. The invective is interpreted as a testimony to 'antibyzantinism'. Furthermore, Gnilka repeatedly criticized Cameron's interpretation of its comments on contemporary events, — with good reason. The following essay is an attempt to discuss this side of Claudian's poem more closely. First the contemporary events will be discussed, which are reflected in the poem.

Eutropius was a eunuch³. He had been a slave for many years before he was freed and thus enabled to serve in the East-Roman court. Since the year 395 he was a '*praepositus sacri cubiculi*', a noted position by virtue of which he was able to influence all decisions of the weak Emperor Arcadius. According to Zosimos he treated the emperor "like an animal" (5, 12, 1). Eutropius claimed the title of "Father of the Emperor" (*patricius*) and insisted on taking command of the military without even having served in the military himself⁴. In 398 he took over the command of the East-Roman troops to fight against the invading enemies from Asia Minor (Claudian, *Eutrop.* 1, 234b - 258). He was successful in driving them out of Roman territory. He was appointed consul by Arcadius for the year 399, an honour never before bestowed upon a eunuch. However, he was overthrown in the same year⁵.

1. A. Cameron, *Claudian. Poetry and propaganda at the court of Honorius*, Oxford 1970, 124 - 155.
2. Chr. Gnilka, *Dichtung und Geschichte im Werk Claudians*, in: *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 10, 1976, 96 - 124; cf. also Gnilka, *Gnomon* 49, 1977, (26 - 51), especially 39 and 48 f.
3. For the influence eunuchs had on politics, especially of East-Rome, cf. M.K. Hopkins, *Eunuchs in politics in the later Roman empire*, *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society* 189, 1963, 62 - 80.
4. Cf. A. Demandt, *Magister militum*, *RE Suppl.* 12 (1970) (553 - 790), 732.
5. Manifold antique reports on this procedure exist: besides Claudian's poem the descriptions of Zosimos 5, 13 - 5, 18, 3, a longer fragment of Johannes from Antiochia (FHG Müller 4, 610 - 612), the ecclesiastical stories by Sokrates (6, 6), Sozomenos (8, 4) and Philostorgios (11,8). — Recent analyses are: O. Seeck, *Arkadios*, *RE* 2, 1, 1895 (1137 - 1153), 1144 - 1147; O. Seeck, *Geschichte des Untergangs der antiken Welt*, vol. 5, Stuttgart 1920/21, 303 - 313; W. Enßlin, *Tribigild*, *RE* 6, 2 A (1937) 2403 - 2405; E. Nischer-Falkenhof, *Stilicho*, Vienna 1947, 84 - 92; E. Demougeot, *De l'unité à la division de l'empire romain 395 - 410*, Paris 1951, 220 - 234.

The main reason for his fall was the evident incapability which he evinced during the revolution of the East-Gothic Greuthungi, who had been colonized in Phrygia by Theodosius some years before. The Goths had participated in a battle against the Huns in 398. Their commander was Tribigild, a tribune in the Roman army. Since Eutropius denied him and his troops special honours for their accomplishments, Tribigild took revenge by plundering Phrygia in the spring of 399 (Eutrop. 2, 174 ff.). Eutropius' subsequent gifts and promises could not reconcile Tribigild (Eutrop. 2, 316b - 324). When the latter threatened neighbouring provinces, Eutropius sent two armies against him, one led by Leo, the other by Gainas; both men were *'magistri militum'*. In the year 395 Gainas, a West-Goth, had been ordered by Stilicho to bring the demanded troops to Byzantium. He was to defend the European coasts against the invading Goths, while Leo remained to fight them in Asia Minor. Tribigild evaded Leo's troops by heading south to Pisidia and Pamphylia. He was trapped and conquered by a force of natives, but was able to escape and assemble a new troop of soldiers. Many of them were deserters who joined Tribigild as Leo advanced (Zosimos 5, 17, 1 f.); the rest of Leo's soldiers were subjugated during an invasion at night. Leo died of excitement (Eutrop. 2, 432 ff.). Thereafter Gainas entered Asia Minor and made peace with Tribigild instead of fighting him. Many ancient authors claim that Gainas and Tribigild had conspired secretly from the start, that Gainas had even instigated Tribigild's revolt⁶. This reproach, very common in antiquity, is certainly unjustified⁷. Gainas more probably simply preferred not matching his Goths against Tribigild's Goths. Gainas' army was smaller than that of Tribigild. After his negotiations with Tribigild, Gainas had a messenger inform Emperor Arcadius that Tribigild would be reconciled only if Eutropius left his seat (Zosimos 5, 17, 2 - 5). — In contrast to other descriptions, the church historians Philostorgios (11, 6) and Sozomenos (8, 7, 3) ascribe the fall of Eutropius to the disfavour of Empress Eudoxia, whom he had insulted very crudely. The two explanatory versions do not exclude each other: Eudoxia might have prompted Eutropius' fall after his position had been weakened due to the revolt.

In July of the year 399 Eutropius was overthrown⁸. He feared for his life, as he had bred much enmity and hatred during his rule. He sought refuge from his guards in a church. When Gainas' soldiers demanded his release, Johannes Chrysostomos reprimanded them. The bishop held his famous *ὁμιλία εἰς Εὐτρόπιον ἐβνουῶνον πατρίκιον καὶ ὑπατον*, while Eutropius, kneeling at the altar, requested the congregation to beg the emperor to pardon himself⁹. But Eutropius' enemies were not reconcilable. Eutropius had to flee when his presence in the church was no longer secure; he was caught. Based upon the decree cod. Theod. 9, 40, 17 (its date

6. Sokrates 6, 6; Eunapios frg. 75,7 (FHG Müller 4, 47); Johannes Ant. frg. 190; Sozomenos 8, 4, 2.

7. Cf. the note by Cameron, Claudian, 135.

8. On July 25, 399 cod. Theod. 9, 14, 3, the law supporting Eutropius, is nullified: cf. O. Seeck, *Regesten der Kaiser und Päpste für die Jahre 311 bis 476 n.Chr.*, Stuttgart 1919, 299.

9. Migne P.G. 52, 1859, 391 - 396; cf. Chr. Baur, *Der heilige Johannes Chrysostomos und seine Zeit*, vol. 2, Munich 1930, 39 ff. for information on Johannes Chrysostomos and Eutropius.

[XVI kal. Feb.] has to be changed to "XVI kal. Sept." [August 17] according to Seeck¹⁰, Eutropius' property was confiscated, he was stripped of all honours and offices (especially those of consul and patriciate) and banned to the island of Cyprus. In the same year he was accused of treason, tried, convicted and executed.

Just like his predecessor Rufinus, Eutropius opposed Stilicho's claim of having been appointed regent to Honorius and Arcadius by Theodosius. The peak of the tension between the two was due to Eutropius' active instigation against Stilicho through the Byzantine senate (Zosimos 5, 11, 1). Stilicho for his part persuaded Emperor Honorius to deny Eutropius the desired recognition as a consul (Eutrop. 2, 123 - 132)¹¹, he did not, however, undertake military actions against him. Later Claudian wrote his invective, one of the most biting of its kind¹².

The first book begins with the proclamation that no one should be astounded at the dire state of affairs which result when a eunuch becomes consul (1 - 20). The *fascēs* must be cleansed of the stains incurred by the appointment of Eutropius. Eutropius must pay with his life (21 - 23a). If a slave becomes consul, then he should at least be a man who has served only one lord in his lifetime; Eutropius had been repeatedly sold (23b - 44a). After this introduction Claudian describes Eutropius' life from his childhood until 398, the year Eutropius was appointed consul (44b - 316). No one in the Western Empire can believe the news (317 - 370). Alarmed, the Goddess Roma sets out to Honorius in Milan. In a long discourse which concludes the book (391 - 513), she implores the emperor to deny Eutropius recognition for the sake of Rome's past (435 - 484a) and for the honour of the consulate (484b - 499). She turns to Stilicho, demanding to know his reasons for hesitating to fight against Eutropius (500). She recognizes Stilicho's willingness (504), but contents herself, that the whip, and not military weapons, is suited for a former slave (505b - 513).

A Praefatio precedes the second book. Having just been a ruler, Eutropius is a slave again, banned from Byzantium (1 - 10). His name is erased from the *fasti* (13)¹³. His fate is the object of mockery. Now Eutropius is on the way to his exile in Cyprus (52; 62); may his ship sink on the way (72)!¹⁴

10. O. Seeck, Arkadios, RE 2, 1 (1895) 1146.

11. Cf. Stil. 2, 279 - 290.

12. For the literary character of Claudian's poem cf. Th. Birt, Zwei politische Satiren, Marburg 1888, 52 ff.; A. Kurfeß, Invektivenpoesie des römischen Altertums, in: Jahres-Berichte des Philologischen Vereins zu Berlin 42, 1916, (184 - 202) 198 - 201; W. Süß, Ethos, Leipzig-Berlin 1910, 264 - 267; P. Fargues, Claudien: Invectives contre Eutrope, Paris 1933, 2 - 8; Chr. Gnllka, Dichtung und Geschichte im Werk Claudians, 102.

13. Cf. cod. Theod. 9, 40, 17.

14. What Claudian desires here, he ironically described previously as his only worry:

sed vereor, teneant ne te Tritones in alto ...

(praef. 2, 67 - 70).

More ironical than serious are the words: *vive pudor fatis* (praef. 2, 47a). Birt did not recognize this (cf. Th. Birt, Zwei politische Satiren, 51); when he compared the notes of the Praefatio with the rivalry described in the second book of the invective, he concluded that Claudian had completely different intentions in his Praefatio; Schanz-Hosius-Krüger present the same view, cf. Geschichte der römischen Literatur, vol. 4, 2, Munich 1920, 17 f.; recently Gnllka agreed with Birt (Dichtung und Geschichte im Werk Claudians, 111).

The second book begins with Claudian's blaming the Eastern Empire for having neglected all warning concerning Eutropius' imminent consulship. Once the prevailing mischief becomes a matter of fact, radical means of fighting the evil are as necessary as those used against advanced disease (2, 1 - 23). Following this introduction, Claudian describes in retrospective the prodigies which preceded Eutropius' consulship (24 - 49); it is a pitiable mistake to entrust this position to a eunuch with so many unfavourable characteristics (50 - 94). Then Claudian narrates the events during 399, which led to Eutropius' fall. In the spring, the court prepared to move to the summer residence in Ankara in order to return triumphantly as it had in the past. Mars turned to Bellona in rage when he saw all this: apparently the Eastern Empire could not stand the peace. If Stilicho had not refused to recognize Eutropius' consulship, the honour of this position would have been threatened. But the Byzantine senate and people accepted the disgrace of the consul! Mars wants to take revenge for this disgrace: Bellona is sent to seduce the East-Goths of Phrygia to a revolt. Upon Tribigild's return from Eutropius with empty hands, Bellona appears to him as his wife and urges him to fight against Eutropius. She vanishes in the form of a bird, whereupon Tribigild and his men plunder Phrygia. Cybele complains about all the destruction in her country. At first Eutropius shuts his eyes to any threats like an ostrich, but then he tries to pacify Tribigild with gifts — in vain. Finally he summons a military council in the palace: it consists of a bunch of spoiled sissies. Here Leo, a former weaver, boasts that he can defeat the intruders in no time. His poorly led army is vanquished by Tribigild, and Leo dies while escaping (95 - 461). When the people of Constantinople hear of this and the rumor that the Parthians had revolted, they lose all hope and courage; like Epimetheus they now recognize the evil signs (462 - 501a). They therefore long for Stilicho's arrival instead of dreading it. They regret their past attitude, and the lictors throw the *fascēs* away (501b - 526a). The Goddess Aurora beseeches Stilicho (526 - 533), and her speech (534 - 602) constitutes the end of the book. First Rufinus planted discord between the two empires. After his death Eutropius, *Rufini castratus ... heres* (550), continued his politics against Stilicho. Along the frontiers, as well as internally, East-Rome is helpless in the face of its enemies. Stilicho is the only hope; may he protect the east as he does the west!

In summary, the first book of the invective discusses Eutropius' life until the year 398; the second book describes the events of 399, which lead to Eutropius' ruin.

The primary political topic of Book I centers Claudian's reproaches against Eutropius' administration¹⁵. Book II is still more important. The story of Tribigild's revolt is introduced in a mythical scenery; this introduction allegorizes Eutropius' fall as punishment for having degraded the position of a consul. In keeping with most ancient testimonies, Claudian also describes Eutropius' fall as mainly due to Tribigild's revolt. Yet, he makes no mention of Gainas, as do the other authors. Seeck claims that Claudian refrained from mentioning him because of the "friendly relationship between Stilicho and Gainas". Gainas was "Stilicho's creature"¹⁶; this

15. Cf. the notes by Cameron, Claudian 127 - 133, for each reprimand.

16. O. Seeck, Studien zu Synesios, in: Philologus 52, 1893, (442 - 483), 456, n. 39.

idea was recently supported by Demougeot¹⁷. However, it is not verified in ancient testimonies. Furthermore, the question should be asked: Why didn't Stilicho request Gainas' support earlier if he could really rely on him to eliminate the troublesome Eutropius? Claudian must have had other reasons for not mentioning Gainas. First, Gainas only had to protect the European coast, whereas Leo had to fight Tribigild. Leo's failure was the cause of everything leading to Eutropius' fall. Incapable as he was indeed, Leo was a better object for a satirical caricature of East-Roman military capabilities than Gainas. Claudian would have had to write a more detailed account of military events if he had wished to describe Gainas' tactics.

When was the invective written? The exact date of its compilation is very important for any judgement of it. The date can only be conjectured from its contents.

It is easiest to determine the compilation date of the Praefatio II. This section must have been written after Eutropius' overthrow, which is often referred to, but before his execution — therefore approximately in the fall of 399.

But what about both books of the invective? Since they do not mention the end of Eutropius' fate either, they might have been written prior to his execution. There is no doubt that they were written after Eutropius became consul, that is, after January 1, 399. Can a precise date *post quem* be found? According to the common viewpoint¹⁸, the books were not written one after the other, but rather at an interval: Book I in January or, at the latest, in February 399, and Book II in the second half of the year.

First of all it should be examined whether the dating of the first book is correct, which is based upon comments in the proem and at the end of the book. In the proem a eunuch dressed in the clothes of a consul is described as the biggest monster. Then the verses continue:

*trabeata per urbes
ostentatur anus titulumque effeminat anni* (1, 9 f.).

The soothsayers and interpreters are asked to find out which evil the gods foresee in the bad omen of Eutropius' position, and which sacrifice would reconcile their anger (1, 11 - 20). The author answers: Eutropius must pay with his life:

*consule lustrandi fasces ipsoque litandum
prodigio; quodcumque parant hoc omine fata,
Eutropius cervice luat* (1, 21 - 23a).

At the end of the book the Goddess Roma elects Honorius to cleanse the honour of the now stained consulship, and commands Stilicho to carry this out (1, 484b - 513). These two paragraphs have supported the idea that Claudian could not have been informed of Eutropius' fall while writing the first book. However, this conclusion does not necessarily follow; that Claudian does not mention the fact does not mean he is unaware of it at this time. The question is likewise valid: could he not have had

17. Demougeot, *De l'unité* ..., 228 f.

18. Th. Birt, *Praefatio* of his Claudian edition (*Monumenta Germaniae Historica*, vol. 10, Berlin 1892), XL; P. Fargues, *Claudian: études sur sa poésie et son temps*, Paris 1933, 23 f. and 83; Demougeot, *De l'unité* ..., 220 and 222; D. Romano, *Claudio*, Palermo 1958, 104, n. 18; Cameron, *Claudian* 127 and 134; P.L. Schmidt, *Politik und Dichtung in der Panegyrik Claudians*, *Konstanzer Universitätsreden* 55, Konstanz 1976, 61.

something that had already happened occur as an object of expectation? An example of this procedure would be Roma's requesting Honorius not to recognize Eutropius' consulship (1, 431 f.). When Claudian began to write the book, Honorius had already done this. — An objection from another perspective may be of greater importance: that which is raised upon consideration of the role the poem plays if the early dating is taken for granted. If Claudian had written and published the book at the beginning of 399, he would have gotten into trouble with Eutropius, who was at the peak of his career at this time. To demand Eutropius' head, as Claudian did in 1, 23, would have meant declaring war against the Eastern Empire — that is, beginning a revolution. Therefore, as Stilicho's advisor Claudian could not have dared making such bold remarks.

Consequently, the first book cannot have been written at the beginning of the year but only after Eutropius' overthrow. This conclusion contradicts in no way whatsoever Roma's beseeching Stilicho to fight Eutropius. "*Quid vincere differs?*", Roma asks him (1, 500). When she notices his willingness to consent (504 f.), she holds him back with the remark that the whip is the appropriate means of punishment for a mere former slave. This remark cannot be taken seriously¹⁹, but must be interpreted as a humorous comment a f t e r the overthrow. Had Claudian written Book I at the beginning of 399 with the intention of instigating Stilicho against Eutropius, he would not have written it in Stilicho's favour as his other poems, but would have tried his own hand at politics — without success. As mentioned above, Stilicho took no steps against Eutropius. This essential fact has not been taken into consideration by those who prefer the early dating²⁰.

Claudian's ambitions only make sense if the tale is comprehended in its entirety. But first it must be clarified when the second book was written. It is generally assumed that it was composed after Eutropius' fall; only Cameron and P.L. Schmidt²¹ believe most of it was compiled and made public before his condemnation. Cameron maintains that Claudian completed the book without awaiting the final outcome and therefore supplemented it in the Praefatio.

Decisive for any attempt to date Book II is a close examination of its beginning as well as its end. In the proem Claudian reproaches the Eastern Empire because it was blind to all warning against Eutropius' consulship. After destruction and decay had struck the East thanks to Eutropius, only radical measures could save the country, even if it meant banning the villain:

*at vos egregie purgatam creditis aulam,
Eutropium si Cyprus habet vindictaque mundi
semivir exul erit? qui vos lustrare valebit
oceanus? tantum facinus quae diluet aetas?*

(2, 20 - 23)

At the end of the book Aurora requests Stilicho to protect not only the Western Empire but also the endangered Eastern Empire:

19. In contrast to Schmidt, *Politik und Dichtung in der Panegyrik Claudians*, 15 f.
20. Concerning the entire topic cf. my review on Cameron's book: *Anzeiger für die Altertumswissenschaft* 28, 1975, (28 - 34), 32 ff.
21. Cameron, *Claudian*, 137; Schmidt, *Politik und Dichtung in der Panegyrik Claudians*, 62.

succurre ruenti!

eripe me tandem, servilibus eripe regnis! ...

nec te subtrahimus Latio, defensor utrique

sufficis

(2, 592 f. and 599 f.)

Because Jeep²² refers *servilia regna* (2, 593) exclusively to Eutropius, he regards the beginning and the end of the second book as a contradiction; the end implies that Eutropius is still in power, whereas the beginning discusses his overthrow. Jeep therefore postulates that verses 2, 10 - 23 were interpolated by a later author. What does Jeep suggest could possibly have inspired such an action? Claudian wrote the Praefatio after having finished the poem; without his consent the Praefatio was inserted in front of the second book, and the same anonymous author assimilated the proem of the second book to the Praefatio. — The assumption of such a grave intervention is only justified if there is no alternative.

Cameron²³ also refers 2, 593 to Eutropius alone and argues that the entire poem presupposes that Eutropius was still in power. When Eutropius was banned, Claudian expressed his joy in the Praefatio. But his expectation that the Byzantine attitude would turn favourable towards Stilicho after Eutropius' fall remained unfulfilled. His frame of mind is evident in verses 2, 7 - 23, which Claudian wrote shortly after having completed the Praefatio, and which he added to the proem. If this is true, why didn't Claudian revise the end of the second book according to the latest events as well? How was Claudian's audience to understand Aurora's appeal at the end of the poem (2, 593), if they had already been informed of the ban (2, 7 - 23)? According to Cameron, after Eutropius' fall the second book lost significance "over night" for any important political decisions of the time²⁴. If this is true, why did Claudian modify the beginning of the book instead of just regarding his work as outdated? Cameron does not answer these questions.

Jeep and Cameron assumed that Book II, excepting the proem, contains no reference to Eutropius' execution. This interpretation should be checked. When Leo is defeated by Tribigild, the news shocks the inhabitants of Byzantium (2, 462 - 473); their fear is increased by the rumor that the succession to the throne in Babylon gave rise to a Parthian revolution against the Romans (2, 474 - 484). This fear, according to Claudian, causes the East-Roman inhabitants' change of heart towards the Western ruler Stilicho. They regret their former aversion — they are ashamed:

*omnes supplicio dignos letoque fatentur,
qui se tradiderint famulis Stilichone relicto.
mutati stupuere diu sensuque reducto
paulatim proprii mirantur monstra furoris
avertuntque oculos: proiectis fascibus horret
lictor et infames labuntur sponte secures*

(2, 516 - 521).

Verses 2, 520b - 521 are of special importance. The *lictores* accompany the higher

22. L. Jeep, Praefatio of his Claudian edition (Leipzig 1876), vol. I, XXIV sqq.

23. Cameron, Claudian, 136 - 138.

24. Cameron, Claudian, 144.

magistrates in public, carrying the *fasces* with the *securae* over the left shoulder. The gesture of throwing away the *fasces* can mean nothing else except that the magistrate has forfeited his post. In 520b - 521 the abrogation of Eutropius' consulship and his downfall are sketched in a few words²⁵. Claudian is not interested in giving a detailed account of it, since Stilicho did not (and could not) claim the merit for himself. The procedure of Eutropius' overthrow itself is of little importance, as Claudian is more interested in an alleged persuasion of the public into a favourable attitude towards Stilicho. A precise description of the details of Eutropius' fall would distract all attention from Stilicho; however, Claudian aims at praising him as the awaited redeemer. Aurora's long speech at the end of the second book serves this purpose. When Aurora bids Stilicho:

eripe me tandem, servilibus eripe regnis!
(2, 593),

she does not mean simply: "Save me from Eutropius immediately!" but also: "Redeem me from the sorry fate of being ruled by men like Eutropius by becoming master yourself!"²⁶ As a matter of fact, her speech ends with the wish that Stilicho govern both empires:

armorum liceat splendore tuorum
in commune frui, clipeus nos protegat idem
unaque pro gemino desudet cardine virtus!
(2, 600 - 602).

In contrast to Cameron's viewpoint²⁷, Claudian does not describe a decline in Eutropius' power at the end of the second book. Rather he typifies the situation after the fall, as seen through the eyes of a poet living at the western court. Therefore, no discrepancy exists between the end and the beginning sections. Jeep's supposition that Claudian's text was altered, and Cameron's idea that Claudian revised the proem of the second book under the impact of the events have no ground. So Book II as well as Book I must have been written *a f t e r* Eutropius' fall. Neither one book is independent of the other: in all probability they were written in one stretch. The Praefatio in front of the second book discusses Eutropius' fall, which Claudian only hints at in the second book: especially because Stilicho had nothing to do with the situation, it should not be the culmination of the narrative. No one else than Claudian himself wrote and placed the Praefatio before the second book. It mediates between the end of Book I, where Stilicho is playfully requested to fight Eutropius, and the proem of Book II, where the East-Roman government's decree to banish Eutropius is decried as an insufficient punishment. If the Praefatio were missing, it would be difficult to find a link to the second book.

The question is of importance: how does this conclusion (which varies from all other datings) influence our judgement of Claudian's intentions when he wrote

25. The correct interpretation was already advanced by Birt, *Zwei politische Satiren* 50, n. 2; Schanz-Hosius-Krüger, vol. 4, 2, 17.
26. That *servilia regna* should be understood in this sense can be concluded from the fact that in the entire paragraph Claudian not only has Eutropius but also Rufinus in mind, as the use of the plural *famuli* in 2, 517 and 535 shows; cf. also 2, 594 *paucorum*.
27. Cameron, *Claudian*, 141.

his invective? Cameron²⁸ surmises that Book I was aimed at generating hatred and antipathy towards Eutropius — in whom is not mentioned; Book II, on the other hand, was intended to prepare Stilicho's intervention in the Eastern Empire²⁹. Since the invective, as has become apparent, presupposes Eutropius' abrogation, it cannot have been intended to influence events, as Cameron assumes. But why did Claudian write an invective against an overthrown power?

Stilicho had been outlawed by the Byzantine senate due to Eutropius' incitement. When Claudian characterizes a contemptuous and unscrupulous former East-Roman ruler, then he does so in order to expose Eutropius' actions against Stilicho (which, like the senate's decree, are not discussed in the poem) as arbitrary and unjustified. Yet Claudian does not limit his work to the purpose of degrading or condemning Eutropius. Rather, he declares that Eutropius' fall has a positive effect on Stilicho's reputation. Arcadius' decree (cod. Theod. 9, 40, 17) stripped Eutropius of all power and banned him. Stilicho could consider himself rehabilitated because of the emperor's measures. Why should he tolerate being *hostis publicus* of the Eastern Empire once the emperor dismissed the man who had instigated against him? It is this side of the story to which Claudian attracts the audience's attention at the end of his poem. His subtle manner shows his artistic talent as a panegyrist. Stilicho's rehabilitation can be seen as an effect of Eutropius' fall, but it certainly was not its goal. Claudian outlines the tale as though the Eastern Empire had sympathized with Stilicho the more it withdrew from Eutropius. Therefore, any step against Eutropius is a step towards Stilicho. Moreover, Claudian has the Goddess Aurora, who is representing the whole Eastern empire, wish that Stilicho rule not only the West but also the East.

Does this wish correspond to the Eastern mood at that time? The royal court in Byzantium was certainly not interested in having that "half-barbarian" Stilicho take over power³⁰. And that the East-Roman population might have desired Stilicho, about whom very little was known, as regent seems just as unlikely. So Claudian does not describe actual events, but he shows Stilicho's hope that after Eutropius' fall his position be confirmed in the entire Roman Empire. The poet does not seem to have known, when he wrote the invective, that the new ruler in Byzantium, Aurelianus, would not acknowledge Stilicho as governor, and that that hope would so be unfulfilled.

Parallel to the appearance of Aurora at the end of Book II, Roma appears at the end of Book I and requests that Honorius deny Eutropius the designation, so that the honour of the consulship remain spotless. This gives rise to the impression that the Italians expected such a move on the part of Honorius towards the end of the year 398. But, that impression is doubtful; on the contrary, the people probably feared that by denying Eutropius the consulship the tension prevailing between both governments would be intensified. Claudian was encouraged by the fact

28. Cameron, Claudian, 134; cf. also Cameron, "Claudian", in: Latin literature of the fourth century, (Greek and Latin studies) London and Boston 1974, (134 - 159) 146.

29. Cameron, Claudian, 143; 258; 368.

30. From Eutrop. 2, 508 and 600 - 602 it has often been surmised that the Byzantine government asked Stilicho for help at that time; this assumption was proven false by Cameron, in: Claudian, 141 - 143.

that Eutropius' fall would subsequently justify Stilicho's influence on Honorius. It is understandable that the poet cannot admit Stilicho's revenge against his rival. Therefore Claudian contents himself with representing the present principate as a perfect guardian of Roman tradition (1, 435 - 479). This coincides mainly with the attitude of the senatorial aristocracy, which was aware and proud of its tradition. Claudian's poem is clearly advertising for the approval of the Roman senators.

It should furthermore be asked whether or not the invective, in which East-Roman affairs are primarily discussed, could reach the Byzantine public beyond the West-Roman Empire? A central motif throughout the entire tale are the reproaches against the East³¹, especially against the government and the senators (who had decided to outlaw Stilicho); the public is also scolded and mocked³². At first glance, this circumstance seems to rule out the idea that Claudian was advertising for Byzantine applause. However, Claudian does not limit himself to scolding and mocking the East-Romans; at the end of his poem he describes a change in their attitude: he has them all regret their dislike for and opposition to Stilicho; he now differentiates between *iusti* and *sontes* (2, 508); and he has Aurora expressly declare that only a few had made themselves guilty (2, 594). So the invective cannot be interpreted as a document of "antibyzantinism". Claudian's poem, which so harshly criticizes East-Rome, ends with a reconciliatory gesture: Claudian does not want to sever all ties between Rome and Byzantium; in view of Stilicho's political ambitions, that is more than understandable. It is clear that Claudian is addressing East-Roman readers as well³³. Claudian uses the downfall of Eutropius, who was deeply despised in the Eastern Empire, as an opportunity for recommending Stilicho as a politician who is willing and capable of serving the entire Empire.

31. Cameron, Claudian, 143 and 367, is mistaken believing that only in the second book the Eastern Empire is attacked: cf. Chr. Gnilka, Dichtung und Geschichte im Werk Claudians, 114; cf. also Gnomon 49, 1977, 39.

Except for the passage mentioned by Gnilka, namely 1, 427 ff., verses 1, 308 ff.; 1, 396 ff. and 1, 471 ff. should be cited.

32. Cf. especially Eutrop. 2, 135b - 137.

33. Cf. N.H. Baynes, Byzantine studies and other essays, London 1960, 338, n. 10.