

Symmachus. Oration II. To Valentinian. 1 January 370.

Introduction

Symmachus, still at court, celebrates Valentinian's third consulship¹ in 370. There is a little information about Valentinian's campaigns against the Alamanni and crossing of the Rhine, with much praise for his building program along that frontier. The orator offers an inaccurate but flattering account in §13 of the abortive coordination between the Roman army and the Burgundians. Lenski 2002: 376 observes that this oration and Themistius *Or.* 10, delivered about the same time with much the same theme, the liminal building program, apparently mark an effort by the emperors to spread the news of their activities; there is little inscriptional evidence for much imperial construction outside of the years close to 370. He concludes that there was coordination between Valentinian and Valens and a well-planned strategy for the frontiers. Matthews 1989: 285–286 discusses the rulers' attempts to show a non-military public what they were getting for their taxes, and what the emperors had to do for them. A number of scholars believe that what Symmachus saw was carefully stage managed (Sogno 2011) so that he would report back favorably to the senate; see Drinkwater 1996, 1999b, Humphries 1999. This includes, according to Drinkwater especially, Valentinian's deliberately exaggerating the dangers at the Rhine and the extent of his counter-measures. Pabst 307 states that one cannot integrate the information from Ausonius, Symmachus, and Ammianus into a coherent history of this brief period.

For an outline noting content as well as topoi usual to panegyric, see Del Chicca 1985: 96–98; she notes that this oration consists of "un unico argomento, l'opera di fortificazione e rafforzamento del *limes* renano perseguita da Valentiniano I nel corso dell'anno 369".

Translation

1 . . . is paid for the labor.² Perhaps a distaste for the celebration and frequent repetition of awards³ would come over you, were you not to consider us and what would be our apparent

¹ §2 *fuit evidens causa qua fasces sumere tertio cogereris.*

² Seck indicates that there is not much missing at the beginning (*desunt pauca*); the subject of the sentence must be *consulatus* or an equivalent. The orator represents the office as (inadequate) recompense for the emperor's services to the state. The commonplace of *onus vs honos* could be usurped even by one outside the imperial family, as Claudius Mamertinus does of his succession of promotions, although he reserves a special place of honor for the consulship (*P.L.* 3.1.4–2.1), and even the empire can be made to seem too little recompense for the trouble involved (*P.L.* 10.3.1–3).

³ Valentinian and Valens never shared the consulship with anyone but an imperial colleague. They held the office together four times: 365, the first full year of their reign; 368, the commencement of their quinquennalia; 370, the present occasion; 373, the commencement of their decennalia. In 370 the emperors held the consulship for the third time in six years; the year marked no anniversary of their reign, and one may compare the ennobling qualities of iterated consulships in the reign of the emperor Vespasian. Hall 106 suggests that the consulship of 370 was "a capstone to his recent activities in the German frontier". Kelly 2013: 272–273 demonstrates the similarity of Symmachus' rhetorical device here to that employed by Pliny *Panegyricus* 79.1.

ingratitude. For you the highest honor is in strength, the most complete honor in character. It is not the shoulders of lictors but the necks of the nations which carry your real axes,⁴ kings preserve your decrees, forts are raised up instead of fasces.⁵ You decide among the hostages with the victor's authority and order those whom you send back to travel one path, those whom you receive to retrace it.⁶ Although the garment rich with clinging gems encircles your sacred shoulders and colored garlands cover your consular robe,⁷ yet the ornament which the Rhine has earned and the border has received is more distinguished.⁸ Your services have surpassed the state's prayer:⁹ what you take is for a year, what you establish, eternal.

2 We know, invincible ruler¹⁰, that there is no recompense equal to such mighty efforts; the same distinction is usually decreed you although you discharge different tasks. If what was paid does not correspond to what you deserve, the honor falls short, not our good will. For what does the consulship add to you, when we count the prosperous years of your reign by the ages of new cities?¹¹ Others' reigns are calculated by fasti,¹² yours by victories.¹³ We have, at any rate, taken proper care of one thing, that in towns recently built people read first the name of the founding consul¹⁴ and triumphal camps are consecrated with illustrious names. The reason why you were

⁴ Symmachus makes a play on words. The lictors attendant upon the consul carried an axe (*securis*), singular, with the bundle of rods as a symbol of authority. In the plural, the word is used as a synonym for Roman authority over other peoples.

⁵ A similar word-play. The lictors could lower (*demittere*, *summittere*, etc.) the rods and axes as a mark of respect before the people; raised, they denoted domination. As Symmachus will argue at great length and with many *exempla*, beginning in §14, the *castella* constitute a firm method and symbol of command.

⁶ Cf. Virgil *Aen.* 1.122 (*Pollux*) *itque reditque viam totiens*. Here Symmachus refers to hostages offered by subject or allied peoples as pledges of good faith. The analogy continues: there is a lengthy contrast between pomp and achievement; cf. *P.L.* 10.3.

⁷ Symmachus compares the trappings of the consulship to adornment of the *limes*, a great project of Valentinian's, with forts and camps. See Ammianus 28.2.1–6 and 30.7.6 (Rhine fortifications, including redirecting the course of the river at one point). There is some of the same language to describe imperial ceremonial costume at *P.L.* 10.3.2. Pabst 308 says that the fortification activities and other actions of 369, detailed in Symmachus *Or.* 2, are not found in Ammianus.

⁸ "More distinguished": *insignior*, and thus more than an adornment put on for a day.

⁹ Cf. *P.L.* 10.6.3&5: upon entering his consulship Maximian suddenly abandoned the ceremonies to repel an invasion, thereby fulfilling the prayers which he had made for the state.

¹⁰ *Moderator* had been used in this sense since Republican times (see *TLL* s.v II.B.2.a) although this passage is the first example of the word in the vocative, addressed to an emperor.

¹¹ See *CTh* 15.1.13, a command (combined with a threat) to Tautomedes (possibly Teutomeres: see *PLRE* svv), dux of Dacia Ripensis, to build new *turres* in addition to repairing existing ones.

¹² Calendar, a register of magistrates: in the case of other emperors, the number of years that they had ruled. Augustus began the practice of counting not regnal years but by years that he had held *tribunicia potestas*.

¹³ Cf. Nazarius *P.L.* 4.19.4 *cum dico proelia, significo victorias*. The adjective *vestra* includes Valens, who had been fighting the Goths (Ammianus 27.5).

¹⁴ Inscriptions were dated by the consuls of the year. In Valentinian's case, he was both founder and consul during the year of foundation.

forced to assume the fasces for a third time is evident: so that the territory most recently annexed not reject its Roman magistrates, a beginning is made with him who is feared.¹⁵ 3 We take nothing away from your earlier¹⁶ accomplishments, Augustus, if we repeat only the recent ones.¹⁷ I am no less astonished,¹⁸ of course, at what I have learnt, but I admire more what I have proved by experience.¹⁹ I wish that at least what I know would recommend my slight intellect!²⁰ I am bereft of an honorable defense: I used to praise what I myself had not seen with greater

¹⁵ Another consul as chief magistrate would be but a name (save in the case of an army officer), whereas Valentinian was the very man who had subjected the territories.

¹⁶ There is a textual problem here that does not interfere with the sense; Seeck prints the ms reading *ante prioribus gestis* and marks off *prioribus* as an artifact of revision. Heindorf, followed by Callu, suggested *a te prioribus gestis*, and Haupt, followed by Pabst, emended to *anterioribus gestis*. Hall also finds the latter reading attractive.

¹⁷ This statement announces a preterition of Valentinian's accomplishments earlier in his reign. For similar passages in earlier panegyrics, see *P.L.* 11.5.2 (followed by a very long list of things passed over at 11.5.2–4), 8.1.6, 3.6.1; *P.L.* 12.4.3, 4.8.3, and 2.14.3 comprise preteritions of a different sort, scandals, insults, or obstacles.

¹⁸ Cf. Cicero *Marc.* 28 *obstupescunt posteri ... audientes et legentes*. Pliny *Pan.* 64.2 also uses *stupeo* to express his disbelief, and that at what he has seen and heard: *stupeo, patres conscripti, necdumque satis aut oculis meis aut auribus credo, atque identidem me an audierim, an uiderim interrogo*; Claudius Mamertinus attributes this amazement to other witnesses (*P.L.* 3.6.3 *Vidimus, felices illius uiae comites, stupentes urbium populos dubitasse credere quae uidebant*). The panegyrist of Constantius is overwhelmed by his task: *P.L.* 8.1.5 *haereo prorsus et stupeo, et praeter illam ex otio meo tarditatem tanta rerum mole deterreo*.

¹⁹ Symmachus, with the rank of *comes ordinis tertii*, attended the emperor in Gaul in 369 and early 370 (*Ep.* 1.32.4: Ausonius to Symmachus, referring to their companionship in the emperor's *comitatus*, 1.14.3: Symmachus to Ausonius on the poem *Mosella*, written in honor of the expedition) (*AE* 1966 518; note also *comiti ordinis tertii* in Dessau *ILS* 2946). He had been sent to Gaul for the purpose of declaiming *Oration* I in honor of Valentinian's *quinquennalia*, and stayed on with the court for at least a year. Thus he can claim personal observation of the campaign which he will shortly describe, but modestly requests forgiveness for his inability to do justice to a superior source of information. And well may he: there are in this oration several activities so vaguely described that one wonders whether the orator took a perverse pride in obscuring what he must have known very well. The combats which he relates took place in 368, prior to his arrival in Gaul. In 369 Valentinian was busy building, not fighting. Coşkun 2002: 413–419 offers good reasons to believe that allusions to Valentinian's campaign in various of the poems are to the summer of 369.

²⁰ Modesty regarding one's own oratorical abilities was a standard trope and a kind of *captatio benevolentiae*, employed even by Cicero (*Arch.* 1 *si quid est in me ingeni, iudices, quod sentio quam sit exiguum*). There are many parallels in the *Panegyrici latini*, e.g., 9.1.1–2, 9.6.2; 6.1.3 (the speaker's *mediocre ingenium* compared to Constantine's *copia laudum*; 5.2.3 (*maiore uoto quam ingenio*); 3.1.1; 12.1.2 and 2.1.1–5 (both with trepidation to exercise what passes for Gallic eloquence in comparison with native Roman). Hall observes that Symmachus' treatment is unique in specifically saying the reward for Valentinian's services, be it eloquence or the consulship, falls short of what is due.

indulgence for my shortcomings. 4 If anyone wants to investigate the secrets of nature,²¹ let him follow you: he will not be held back by rivers' courses, by the opposition of mountains,²² by wandering roads. All things which are fortified for us lie open against the barbarians. Your two-horned neighbor²³ knows that it must submit to curved vessels to avoid having to furnish a path for footsteps;²⁴ he who can cover over streams finds sailing child's play. Nor are we hindered by the barriers of steep terrain: this very bank in barbarian territory, to which altitude gave its name,²⁵ attests²⁶ that the heights have given way to the depths; those who could²⁷ attack on the plain recently fled our ascending army.²⁸ You would in fact have preferred to conquer in battle, but it turned out to be more glorious that the fierce²⁹ nation of the Alamanni saw . . . one folium

²¹ As Hall notes, Symmachus enumerates natural features only as obstacles to a march. Less prosaically, one finds *arcana naturae* used of heavenly bodies in a declamation ascribed to Quintilian (*Decl. Mai.* 4.14); also in Seneca *Dial.* 6.25 and *Ep. Mor.* 102.28. Later, Pacatus (*P.L.* 2.6.3 and 2.19.2) modifies *arcanum* with the adjective *caeleste*.

²² *Obiectus* = projection; cf. Tacitus *Ann.* 14.8.

²³ The Rhine, as in Virgil *Aen.* 8.727, *P.L.* 6.11.5, 9.21.1 (*convexa Rheni cornua*, rather than *bicornis*), Ausonius *Mos.* 437, and Symmachus *Or.* 3.9.

²⁴ The end of the sentence indicates that a bridge need not be built, rather than the more natural conclusion that the river affords a path when it is frozen.

²⁵ Alta Ripa, Valentinian's location 19 June 369 (*CTh* 11.31.4). See below, notes 28 and 74. On the fortifications at Alta Ripa, see Schönberger 1969: 184, von Petrikovits 1971: 185–186, 202.

²⁶ The phrase *testis est*, followed by one or more locations, can be found in Pacatus' later panegyric, *P.L.* 2.34.1; the obvious predecessor is Cicero's praise of Pompey, *Leg. Man.* 30–31 *testis est Italia ... testis Sicilia ... testis Africa ... testis Gallia ... testis Hispania ... testis iterum et saepius Italia ... testes nunc vero iam omnes orae atque omnes terrae gentes nationes, maria denique omnia cum universa tum in singulis oris omnes sinus atque portus*.

²⁷ Seeck wrote *consuerunt* for the ms *potuerunt*; the manuscript reading is preferable (so also Hall, Pabst, Callu).

²⁸ According to Ammianus 27.10.1, while Valentinian was preparing for a campaign against the Alamanni, the latter successfully raided Mainz, which was undefended. When warm weather arrived the Romans crossed the Rhine (*RE* 2173.42–46) and marched for several days before encountering the enemy (27.10.6–7). Valentinian stopped at a place called Solicinium, whence he launched a battle against the Alamanni, who had occupied a mountain (*mons praecelsus*). The Romans charged uphill and, after a long and hard fight, routed the enemy (27.10.8–15). If Symmachus refers to that engagement here, he does not admit to much combat: perhaps it seemed preferable to portray the enemy fleeing at once. The orator's words about the Rhine, just above, might bear a temporal and geographical relationship to the charge up the mountain.

The location of Solicinium is unknown; Demougeot 1966: 32 n. 5; Gutmann 26–27 with n. 119; Green 507–508 on *Mosella* 423. Drinkwater 1999a: 448 argues from Ammianus' description of slow marching for a short time that it cannot be far from the Rhine; Shanzer 1998a: 206–215 discusses possibilities, including near Lopodunum or the source of the Danube. Curran in *CAH* 13 (2008) 84 describes this action as occurring at Mount Pirus.

²⁹ The term *ferox natio* is used of the Alamanni at *P.L.* 8.2.1 (*ferocissima natio*); as is the Rhine near the Main and Neckar (*P.L.* 6.13.2). The Franks are *ferox* as well (*P.L.* 6.11.4, 6.12.3, 4.16.5).

5 . . . keep secret. Thus Crassus, when his son demanded to know at what time of night he had ordered the camp to be moved, replied, "are you afraid that the sound of trumpets might not reach your ears?"³⁰ It is enough for us to attend to the present; let fortune arrange future events with you.³¹ Does anyone doubt that barbarians always suspect what they have often endured? But unexamined reality³² makes them more anxious than prepared. They know, what . . . to beware.³³ The prince's deep thinking³⁴ has provided both that the forethought of those who never rested easy is disappointed, and that a spirit free from uncertainty fortified these, who were not troubled before.

6 Why should I extol your expertise in war, your skill in leading an army on the march, your knowledge of terrain, measuring of time, labor without †disaster, concern without sorrow?³⁵ I have seen³⁶ the most faithful of your officers³⁷ happier than usual, when sent ahead to the

³⁰ Probably apocryphal. Frontinus *Strat.* 1.1.13 (M. Licinius Crassus percunctanti, quo tempore castra moturus esset, respondit: "Vereris, ne tubam non exaudias?") did not name the person who asked Crassus the question; Plutarch wrote that Demetrius Poliorcetes asked the same question of his father Antigonos (*Demetrius* 28.10). Hall notes Symmachus' close verbal echoes of Frontinus' vocabulary and word order, and believes that he is working from that text but leaving the identity of the specific Crassus unstated, allowing the listener to realize that the son involved was probably the one who had distinguished himself under Caesar in Gaul and later lost his life on his father's Parthian expedition. Frontinus did name M. Crassus, and the triumvir is surely the default for any mention of Crassus in late antiquity. This is the sole historical *exemplum* in the oration and, as Portmann 52 noted, inappropriate in view of the disastrous Parthian campaign during which Crassus' son served with him.

³¹ For Symmachus, fortune replaces a different aspect of divinity, but the idea remains that the emperor has access to information not available to normal men. Cf. *P.L.* 12.2.5 *habes profecto aliquod cum illa mente diuina, Constantine, secretum, quae delegata nostri diis minoribus cura uni se tibi dignatur ostendere*, and Pacatus later (2.6.4 *tibi istud soli pateat, imperator, cum deo consorte secretum*).

³² *inexplorata veritas* probably indicates that the opponents did not keep apprised of their circumstances and the approach of the Romans.

³³ In the apparatus, Seeck supplies *sciunt quid cavendum sit, nesciunt cavere*: they know what is to be guarded against, but they do not know how. Callu accepts that, while Pabst leaves the lacuna.

³⁴ *altitudo*: in this sense usually appears with a modifier, e.g., *animi* (Cicero *Off.* 1.88), *conceptarum* (Gellius 1.15.3). But Tacitus twice uses it alone to mean 'sublimity' (*Dial.* 21.3 *eaepiacent, ... in quibus nitorem et altitudinem horum temporum adgnosimus*; *Dial.* 31.6).

³⁵ This carefully arranged recitation of abilities and actions enables the orator to omit specific details, and combines aporia with preterition. Cf. *P.L.* 11.5.1, 9.18.4 (*nam quid ego alarum et cohortium castra percenseam toto Rheni et Histri et Eufratae limite restituta?*), 6.6 (an entire section on the virtues and accomplishments of Constantius I), 12.20.1 (more briefly of Constantine's visit to the senate: *nam quid ego de tuis in curia sententiis atque actis loquar?*), and Nazarius several times (4.8.3 on Maxentius' misdeeds, 4.18.1 names of six allied Germanic peoples; 4.25.1 sequence of events in northern Italy).

³⁶ This must be 'seen' in the sense of 'recognized' after the action, because he had not gone on ahead.

destination³⁸, that what they had only deserved to learn before the rest, they rejoiced with everyone that even they had not previously known. They said that two things had been granted them when your judgment chose them and your auspices aided them, and they did not doubt that the prince would be with them without delay. And he, among the divided cohorts and separated legions, both took sudden part in what they had begun and offered to us³⁹ what remained. Thus neither part complained either that the commander had quickly departed or arrived too late.⁴⁰ Divine counsels are manifest after the event: we realized that you sent some men ahead so that victory would not be late, but held back most of them so that a multitude would not arouse suspicion. You disposed of Alamannia before you sought what was further inland.⁴¹

7 You see that nothing is far for those who care for great things: you neither leave him who remains behind nor are you abandoned by him who goes ahead. Now I pardon the barbarians' inactivity: what good does it do to ask where you chiefly spend your time when you always appear everywhere?⁴²

8 Let us hear, emperor, the history of the Trojan war! I shall prove that Greece lied about trivial affairs and respected neither greatness nor the truth. They say that the heroes borne to Troy on ships were afraid to touch an unknown shore, until either one who was vigorous and rash entered upon the dreaded oracles or one who was accomplished in deceit cheated them.⁴³ I want no tricks, I want no lies! In the army of my prince men vied to be first to march out, and the

³⁷ *Comites*: i.e., "counts," officers.

³⁸ *destinata TLL* n. *destinatum*: an object determined upon, not necessarily a physical place.

³⁹ I.e. Symmachus and the part of the army with which he remained. Unless Symmachus had reached Valentinian's court by the campaigning season in 368, he refers to some action in 369, not part of the narrative in Ammianus. Yet many of the details fit operations in Ammianus 27.10.

⁴⁰ There is a page of manuscript missing between sections 4 and 5. Symmachus might or might not be recounting here the same action as in §4, but it ought not to be what is described at Ammianus 27.10.10–11. The historian says that Valentinian sent Sebastianus with his men to occupy the northern slopes. Without telling any of his officers (*nullo potentium in conscientiam arcani adhibito*), Valentinian with a few men went on a scouting expedition to discover a better path up. The attempt did not turn out well; cf. Seager 1996 and 1999: 595. Meanwhile Valentinian left Gratian with the Joviani.

⁴¹ An indication that Valentinian's operations took place in or near the Agri Decumates; Symmachus continues to speak of the Rhine in subsequent sections. The prominence given the Rhine indicates either (a) a series of operations not far from that river or (b) an unwillingness on the part of the orator to restrict himself to a geographical or chronological framework. On the Agri Decumates see Hind 1984, who believes that the inhabitants moved or were moved to the west side of the Rhine and occupied the Decem Pagi; Kerneis 1999.

⁴² Cf. earlier panegyrics, e.g. *P.L.* 11.4.4, 4.26.1 on ubiquitous emperors; somewhat differently *P.L.* 10.5.3, 12.9.5. Seeck notes in his apparatus that this section ought to be placed before the last sentence (*ante Alamanniam ... quaereres*) in §6; later commentators do not concur.

⁴³ The first ashore was Protesilaus: Catullus 68.73ff, Ovid *Her.* 13; Hyginus *Fab.* 103f. But the one versed in deceit must be Odysseus; Pabst observes that only Ausonius *Epitaphia Heroum* XII has a version incorporating him in the fate of Protesilaus, and Green 1991: 371 says that either Symmachus or Ausonius could have brought this story to the other's attention.

ships' beaks had not yet struck against the tip of the banks when the eager soldier was already leaping off. Allegiance is safe under such a commander; each man was more concerned that no one get ahead of him than that no one oppose him.

9 You seem to me to have done more than everyone, since you offered good fortune to individual men. His steps did not stick fast in the sands and he did not linger in a slow struggle through the ascent. Everything seemed easier than it was: the Rhine calm when it surged, the earth firm when it gaped open, the bank level when it was steep.⁴⁴

10 For these valiant excursions no way is sought for surprise nor for the sudden slaughter of an ambush, † to strike anticipated;⁴⁵ prosperous speed sates the spirit eager for glory.⁴⁶ You allowed them to depart with their children and, that they might better learn that the wars are concluded, you allowed arms to be conveyed by the barbarians. No one used deadly fire to pillage huts covered with cheap straw, no ravisher appeared before dawn to drag out wild mothers sleeping in their beds; drunkenness⁴⁷ was scarcely sweated out in time and beds cooled off when they mixed flight with pardon. As a field is open to swift deer, as listless flocks of stags driven out from their sylvan coverts are forced into open spaces, thus it seemed more pleasing to watch the barbarians running about than to kill them.⁴⁸

11 Freedom from punishment prevailed over the spectacle of triumph: if I rightly judge the nation's inflexible mind, it believes that life is disgraceful for one whom contempt has passed over.⁴⁹ May one never repent of having spared the fearful.⁵⁰ the praise for combat is chancy; for

⁴⁴ The superiority of a ruler over natural elements is a standard part of praise, and may take the form of nature's subservience to an emperor's will, e.g., *P.L.* 10.12.3–8, 8.6.2 or an emperor's ability to overcome natural barriers that may even change their nature: Pliny *Pan.* 16.5, *P.L.* 11.2.4, 6.13.3.

⁴⁵ An apparently insoluble textual problem: in the apparatus Seeck cites three attempts at restoration; Pabst prints Mai's suggestion (*haud placet ferire praeuentos*) and Callu Haupt's (*nec repentinae caedi ansa. Parum placet ferire praeuentos*). The general sense, praise of the open approach, is clear. All attempted restorations reported by Seeck change *praeuentus* to *praeventos* and add a form of negative to make the point that Valentinian did not make his move on surprised people.

⁴⁶ Del Chicca 1991: 124–125 discusses this extended description of the barbarians' humiliation.

⁴⁷ Tacitus *Germ.* 22–23 is apparently the earliest mention of German affinity for beer, and had Symmachus named the preferred beverage he might have struck too close to home, for during the siege of Chalcedon, whose inhabitants had declared for the usurper Procopius, Valens was called Sabaiarius (beer drinker) as an insult (Ammianus 26.8.2): Forbes 283.

⁴⁸ Cf. Matthews 1975: 32 on this passage: "He attended a successful skirmish against helpless (and one suspects, harmless) Alamanni". This narrative has no parallel in Ammianus. Note that Ammianus 28.2.6 refers to *optimates Alamanni*, whose children were hostages under the terms of a peace treaty (date and cause of which unknown: it may be recent). G. Sabbah 337 n. 64 compares, on this passage, Ammianus 16.12.57 (the pleasure of the observers after the battle of Strasbourg), and perhaps Tacitus *Germania* 33.2. Drinkwater 2007: 291 and Sogno 2011: 139–141 discuss the effect of this staged scene on the orator, a man with no military experience.

⁴⁹ Cf. *P.L.* 11.14.1 *se contemni sentiunt cum relinquuntur*.

clemency, assured.⁵¹ He who has not earned an enemy's hatred ceases to be an equal. We must suspect one of two things about the wretched people: if they are inflicted with your indulgence, believe me, they have been punished, if they rejoice, they are beholden.

12 I shall say what no monuments attest to: the inhabitant of Alamannia lives for you; those whom you subtract from slaughter you add to the empire. It is enough that you have changed the character of the peoples by sparing them. What remains free for them since their wellbeing has been subjected by your kindness, and their territory by your fortresses?⁵² By right they are free for the moment, but already captive by shame. Or will they disperse to faroff places, when not only your standards but your new towns pursue them?

13 Cultivation⁵³ has driven out the natives, and as if the land between were already empty the further neighbor demands a treaty with Rome. As I predict, it is not for nothing that frequent delegations of Burgundiones⁵⁴ have demanded concord: either they feel the prince's arms, or

⁵⁰ Straub 1986: 215 observes that since Virgil wrote *parcere subiectis . . .* (*Aen.* 6.853), no one failed to refer to it.

⁵¹ This is a translation of Seeck's text, although Seeck believed that this sentence (*numquam ... clementiae*) ought to have been placed before *triumphi speciem*. Callu transposes only the second part (*laus ... clementiae*).

⁵² Valentinian built a continuous line of forts all along the Rhine, some on the right bank (Ammianus 28.2.1). The attempted fortification of Mt. Pirus, deeper in foreign territory, brought retaliation by the Alamanni: all the Roman soldiers working on the spot were killed (28.2.5–9). Schönberger 1969: 185 says that no archaeological evidence had been found for either the fortification erected by Julian in the territory of the Alamanni or Mount Pirus. Zosimus says (4.12.1) that Valentinian enrolled and trained such a capable army that no foreigners crossed the Rhine for nine years. This notice comes just prior to (1) the revolt of Valentinianus (Valentinus in Ammianus 28.3.4ff) in Britain (369), (2) Valentinian's illness and declaration of Gratian as Augustus (367) (Zosimus 4.12.2). Hall 140–141 discusses the possibility that Valentinian wanted to restore, or to be thought to so intend, the Severan *limes*, and thus presented his series of forts and his plans with the Burgundians.

⁵³ Civilization, rather: Hall, Pabst, Callu.

⁵⁴ Ammianus 28.5.9–11 reports that Valentinian asked the Burgundians to make war upon their neighbors the Alamanni: the Burgundians were willing enough, not only because they believed themselves to be descended from Romans, but because of long-standing disputes with the Alamanni over their common border and *salinae* (salt-works). What was to have been a joint effort against the Alamanni never came about, for the Burgundians arrived while Valentinian was engaged with his building program. Their appearance aroused fear in the Roman provinces (Ammianus 28.5.11: *terrori nostris fuere vel maximo*). It is a curious episode. Orosius 7.32.11 has (from Jerome 2389): *Burgundionum quoque novorum hostium novum nomen, qui plus quam octoginta milia, ut ferunt, armatorum ripae Rheni fluminis insederunt*. He continues with a history of the people, an etymology of their name (from *burgos*, their dwellings), and a relieved description of their present civilized (read Christianized) behavior as inhabitants of Gaul (7.32.12–13).

already the lofty roofs of the camps glow from a distance. They wish to be connected to the victors in peace before they have connecting borders. If you were to have any time at leisure, perhaps they would have put off their prayers. Whatever lies between, you will join by an approach to be equipped⁵⁵ . . . [barbaria?] is entirely consumed with making requests. Where are those⁵⁶ who formerly took the cities of Germany⁵⁷ by siege? If it is right to say it, they are besieged by cities.

14 What I have often failed to believe is true, that even thanks⁵⁸ for the accomplishment is due. In what state, inhospitable region, did we recently find you? You were ignorant of the antiquity⁵⁹ of your cities and ugly with houses of twigs and roofs of grass. I reproach you for your own benefit with having been conquered: with the rest of the provinces you too are now towered and adorned.⁶⁰ Lands serve my prince more happily than they resist him: if the regions which he has recently annexed are compared to those which he has not touched, who would not think that the latter, which are free, were subdued, and the former, which were captured, were protected?⁶¹

The Burgundians returned in high temper to their own territory, but the general Theodosius was able to take advantage of the confusion generated by their stay to attack the Alamanni with some success while the latter were dispersed (Ammianus 28.5.12–13, 15).

⁵⁵ Seeck suggests filling the lacuna with something like *barbaria pro parte citeriore pugnant, pro ulteriore rogans*: "the barbarians are entirely occupied with fighting for the territory near [to ours], and making requests for the farther region". Hall finds this faithful to the sense; Pabst encloses *ore rogans tota consumitur* with daggers. Callu merely adds *natio* between *rogans* and *tota*.

⁵⁶ Alamanni.

⁵⁷ The provinces, Germania Inferior and Superior (Pabst: Germania I), whose territory was bounded by the Rhine (Callu 55 "les provinces romaines de la rive gauche du Rhin") and which were most liable to attack by their neighbors from across the river. The conceit which follows is another expression of the security afforded by Valentinian's fortifications. The Rhine frontier was a constant worry; cf. *P.L.* 10.7.3&7, 6.11.1–6. Hall, however, believes that *Germaniae civitates* means the Burgundians, and Symmachus refers to their struggles over the salt works.

⁵⁸ Seeck suggests, "fort. etiam ab hostibus tibi gratiam benefacti deberi": "thanks for the favor is due you even from the enemy". Pabst in the apparatus states that this is perhaps correct; Callu prints the conjecture.

⁵⁹ Pabst and Callu prefer Kroll's emendation *venustatis*, a reading which makes sense, given the description of the more recently built dwellings and contrast with *indecoram*.

⁶⁰ *turrita* is turreted, as ancient cities were depicted. Should Symmachus be describing a new province, never before Roman, or the re-establishment of Roman authority in long-lost territory? Hall believes this means ignorance of city living ("ignorant of cities of great antiquity") – yet Ammianus 16.10.13 lists the cities that the Alamanni had taken, although he says that they refused to live in the buildings, only on the land.

⁶¹ Hall wrote, "this paradox emphatically conveys the notion that so-called free peoples are little more than barbarians living in a squalid condition (i.e. with the appearance of 'having been taken by storm'), while those within the empire bear the marks of civilization (i.e. 'defensive structures')." So Callu 55 n. 10.

15 Hear, you who are ignorant of what was done, what marvelous things I affirm: the barbarian of his own accord offered what was to be demolished⁶² and aided in the execution of new construction,⁶³ fearing, I believe, that a cessation of work be turned into a motive for war. What tribute can be heavier! He who offers service of this sort against himself surpasses every kind of servitude. O absolutely lovely display of fortune! He was refashioning the shackles which he had cast off.

16 Perhaps the neighboring people⁶⁴ had provided that the victor not choose to restore what they left for themselves. The ancient traces of a colony once Roman⁶⁵ and the inscriptions betraying their crime chafed the nation guilty of robberies. It restored to obedience what it knew would be claimed by the sword. And in this affair the victor's spirit was apparent when he transferred the remains of the recovered city; for he showed that he could repair what he was at liberty to carry off. It is customary for great spirits to scorn short cuts: the losing of it proved that the city had been rashly sited; we free the captured city to found a free one. Our predecessors' faults have been cancelled out:⁶⁶ you have recovered what was shamefully lost, you correct what was negligently done. Alamannia has fallen into such a condition that when it was constrained to lose its own territory it admitted that it had held ours.

17 Tyrian Carthage, which the wealthy stranger built on Punic⁶⁷ soil, was sold by the Libyans at a price.⁶⁸ Behold the old⁶⁹ examples of the ages! The land of Libya was secure from an armed populace and not, I suspect, of free approach⁷⁰. Defencelessness compelled them to

⁶² The derelict Roman fort.

⁶³ The construction at Mannheim-Neckarau on the right bank: see below §20.

⁶⁴ Alamanni.

⁶⁵ Sabbah 343 with n. 86 identifies Augusta Raurica (Augst), not mentioned in Ammianus. Piganiol 177–8 cites both Worms (Borbetomagus, L bank) and Ladenburg (Lopodunum) as supplying the stones. Jullian 244 note 3 (continued from p. 243): "Je crois en revanche qu'on a eu raison (*Corpus, id.*) de voir en ce fortin l'héritier de la *colonia* de Ladenburg ... détruite par les Alamans (Symmaque, § 16)." and that fortifications at Alta Ripa facilitated by using what was left from Ladenburg (Lopodunum). Pabst 307, quoting Ausonius' words ending *Nicrum super et Lupodunum*, writes, "welch letzteres sich hinter der *Romana colonia* des Rhetors (or. 2,16) verbergen dürfte", and cf. her pp. 145–146, where she rejects the interpretations of inter alios Sabbah 343 and Piganiol 197 – I think she means 177. Matthews 1989: 285 writes Lopodunum (Ladenburg) without argument or citation

⁶⁶ Cf. *antiquo* in the sense of "abrogate, erase" in Symmachus *Ep.* 3.9, 6.28, 10.44.3.

⁶⁷ Proleptic: Punic once the people from Tyre had settled.

⁶⁸ There is a severe textual problem at this point; see Seeck's apparatus, Hall 155, del Chicca 1986.

⁶⁹ Hall, followed by Pabst, believes that *veteratus* is especially uncomplimentary, given the only two examples offered in L&S. OLD has "stale" (as in old cheese) as one definition. Symmachus' point may not, however, be that antiquity is contemptible but that his *exemplum* is hackneyed, or that he has to reach into the mythic past to find an analogy to illustrate what he wants to say.

⁷⁰ Callu, following Kroll, has *auctionis*, not *aditionis*: "of an easy sale"; del Chicca 1986: 132 also argues for *auctionis*.

request a small space of a bull's hide circuit marked out,⁷¹ but to make the trade more shameful, the trick of the circularly cut hide augmented the disgrace of the purchase.⁷² Kingdoms surrender to you, they are not sold, and the fates of your cities are not weighed out. You approach everything as if you were returning to your own. We are not driven back by the sword, we do not cheat with gold or bronze.⁷³ The same fear confines the enemy's avarice which restrains his audacity; if self-confidence in battle is taken away there is no room for bargaining. Let the barbarian appraise his own lands for you, if he dares oppose you. Alamannia already obtains a gift from you,⁷⁴ because you leave much untouched for the moment.

18 Let the rest of the cities, which private hands have marked out, envy the new ramparts,⁷⁵ if there are any of the princes' creating, may they be stung with jealous spite. They have renowned founders, but no artisans clad in purple, do they? I was present,⁷⁶ venerable Augustus, when you set aside your arms and traced out the foundations, occupying your fortunate right hand with builders' lines.⁷⁷ For this reason I promise your towns eternal good fortune: he who is

⁷¹ This phrase (*bovini tegminis ambitum definitum*) is transposed in Pabst and Callu to after *breve spatium*, where it makes more sense. Seeck says that Gruppe puts the phrase after *postulari*.

⁷² Symmachus refers to the ancient tale of the foundation of Carthage and the device whereby Dido acquired more territory for the price. See Virgil *Aen.* 1.365–368 and Servius ad loc.; Livy 34.62.12.

⁷³ Hall translates *fraudamur*, with note (Seeck had changed to *fraudamus*). Lenski 150 also translates *fraudamur*. I am not happy with Hall's explanation that the Carthaginians cheated with an oxhide, not money. And the idea should correlate to what precedes, viz., that cities are not sold. Ergo, the Romans don't cheat. Pabst and Callu have *fraudamus*, agreeing with Seeck. A better argument for *fraudamur* can be found in del Chicca 1986: she offers numerous parallels from Pliny through the fourth century panegyrics, Latin and Greek, to show that Romans prided themselves on being able to refrain from gaining advantage by payment of any kind. If that is the meaning of *fraudamur*, that the Romans are cheated *because* they must pay a foreign enemy, this argument makes sense. Yet to equate fraud with military weakness is a stretch, although the Carthaginians, after the first Punic war, would not have agreed.

⁷⁴ Cf. Ammianus 26.5.7: the Alamanni rebelled in 365 when the Romans' gifts were not up to the usual standard. This gift, however, is that Valentinian did little to molest the Germans.

⁷⁵ Pabst 334 n. 133 says that there has been much discussion, and no agreement, about whether Ammianus 28.2 describes the same activities as Symmachus does in §§18ff. Matthews 1975: 33 n. 1 finds similarity in the descriptions in Symmachus 2.18 and Ammianus 28.2.2. Gutmann 242 writes that Symmachus' descriptions of hostages in §§1, 12, 15, and hostages and treaty in §23 refer to the treaty (and hostages) in Ammianus 22.5.8.

⁷⁶ Salzman 2006: 363 n. 44 believes that Symmachus' presence, combined with a date of 368 for *Oration* 1, means that the campaign described in this oration took place in 368. But this is not necessarily the case, especially if *Oration* 2 was delivered in Valentinian's presence – Symmachus would have been in Gaul all summer 369. She does not say that Ammianus' account of combat followed by building activities precludes, for her, two campaigning seasons involving Valentinian in person.

⁷⁷ Valentinian personally oversaw the construction of at least one fortification, which is usually (but not by Jullian: see below note 97) equated with the construction of Mannheim-Neckarau by

next after god⁷⁸ begins things which are eternal. The glory of Syracusan Archimedes has abided until now; for the end has taught that the contrivances of a clever man were worth nothing for his citizens.⁷⁹ If he could not protect what was walled, when would he have been able to fortify what lay open? Those who watch over cities establish them more skillfully.

19 But I do not know what I should marvel at first, that the rest from the practice of construction, you through yourself alone, knew what you were building, or that all who were present at the spot were instructed by you as sole teacher?⁸⁰ No one went away from there ignorant, because he had already been educated through you. I pass over the fact that when others were concerned about the changes of seasons you endured the force of sun or rains with perpetual patience — how much labor does the state's ever vindicated peace cost you!⁸¹ — Epeius⁸² alone brought ruin to Trojan towers and Cretan⁸³ Daedalus imprisoned the beast⁸⁴ which attacked Athenian nobility: what will Alamannia expect, when an entire army knows how both to subject and to confine it?

20 Into what peril has my speech fallen? I dare neither describe nor be silent about the form of the city's foundation. But I shall heed my confidence, which counsels boldness. Nature's gift

the bank of the Neckar (Ammianus 28.2.2: *munimentum celsum et tutum, quod ipse a primis fundarat auspiciis*).

⁷⁸ Ausonius *Gr. Act.* 5.21 will employ the same formulation.

⁷⁹ Symmachus is inexact. See Livy 24.34 for Archimedes' devices; their successful employment prevented the Romans from taking Syracuse by assault. The city later surrendered, and Archimedes was killed during the pillaging (Livy 25.30–31).

⁸⁰ Here Hall rejects Heindorf's emendations that Seeck accepted (*ceteros . . . te per te*), and translates differently. Pabst concurs. Callu accepts the emendation, and so translates ("toi seul . . . par toi-même"). At the moment I have no problem with Seeck's text. Hall's argument about Valentinian's experience is fairly good, but it always seemed to me to be more imperial to know things by, as it were, magic or something, rather than practice.

⁸¹ Seeck wants to move the lines from "I pass over . . . cost you" to the beginning of the section; Hall concurs that this is more logical. Callu believes that Pabst's translation (*mutatis mutandis*, about the same as mine) sticks closely to the text and reflects only that Valentinian, due to his upbringing, is indifferent to vagaries of weather. His translation ("alors que les autres, par roulement, n'avaient que des charges mensuelles") reflects his beliefs that it was more usual for construction crews to be replaced each month.

⁸² The creator of the Trojan horse, who appears in the *Iliad* as the winner of the boxing match at the funeral games for Patroclus (23. 664–699), a better boxer than warrior, as he says himself (μάχης ἐπιδευόμεναι 23.670). The earliest mention of him as builder of the Trojan horse, with the help of Athena, is in the *Odyssey* 8.493, 11.523; he is linked with other sculptors, viz. Daedalus and Theodorus, in Plato *Ion* 533a–b. In the *Aeneid* 2.264 he is one of the men concealed in the horse that he had made.

⁸³ Daedalus was generally thought to have been an Athenian, although as Hall notes his association with Crete led others to believe he was a native of that island (Ausonius *Mos.* 300). To Daedalus in particular were attributed all sorts of inventions and devices; see W. K. Pritchett, "Daidalos" in *Pausanias Periegetes* (1998) 170–204 for a review of evidence.

⁸⁴ The Minotaur in the labyrinth.

first presents itself to onlookers, the embankment of soil and the friendly bend⁸⁵ of two rivers;⁸⁶ next a skilled hand has surrounded the twin placement of ramparts with a mole.⁸⁷ There follows a stage of walls sloping downwards only at that part where the waters touch edges of the towers.⁸⁸ For the Rhine is confined from both sides with dikes, to have it render its passage safe for various uses. These themselves⁸⁹ which are encircled with towers, are properly fitted out for their work, the joints separated only with numerous apertures opens up a passage for concealed casts of arrows. The gilded elevation of the middle of the citadel stands firm, bedecked with roof for trophy, over which through courses sloping downward a breastwork of smooth lead is covered. What feelings should we believe were yours, Augustus, while you were building these works? You fortified them, as if anxious; you adorned⁹⁰ them as if carefree.

21 An ancient tale has recorded that a giant's hand once advanced mountain-towers to the stars. Perhaps he tried to do such a thing, for it is not worthy of belief that young men, although Earthborn,⁹¹ carried Pelion and Ossa.⁹² While they were attempting the extraordinary, they wrought something weak; but tradition has increased the odium, so that the fragility of a building negligently erected be freed from the fault of carelessness under the pretence of a divine conspiracy. Or if faith in such things is established, you have great proof of your merits: these buildings of yours were brought to completion by heavenly favor as great as the hatred by which those fell to ruin.

22 Nearby foreign lands are beset by our eyes and understand that their freedom has to a great extent been taken from them because they may not have a hiding place.⁹³ I would not

⁸⁵ *Adflexus* is a hapax; this passage is the only one cited in *TLL*.

⁸⁶ Rhine and Neckar.

⁸⁷ Hall compares Caesar *BC* 1.25 and Suetonius *Claud.* 20.3.

⁸⁸ Von Petrikovits 1971: 185–186 has a brief mention of the trapezoidal fort at Alta Ripa (see Figure 19 on 185) and the landing nearby at Mannheim-Neckarau. (Other images on his pp 194 and 202) It is securely dated to the reign of Valentinian: Bajenaru 75. Pabst has a good image of the area: illustration 2 on p. 376. Drinkwater 2007: 290–292 discusses Symmachus' description of these works and their location.

⁸⁹ The *bracchia*.

⁹⁰ Cf. *P.L.* 6.11.5 *contra hinc per interualla disposita magis ornant limitem castella quam protegunt* (also of the Rhine).

⁹¹ To call them *terrigenae* recalls the version in Vergil's *Georgics* 1.278–283, where the poet describes Terra's offspring. Giants were, however, generally referred to as *terrigenae* (Mynors on the *Georgics* 1990: 64–65); cf. *P.L.* 10.4.2.

⁹² The tale of Otos and Ephialtes (Giants), the Aloadae, who attempted to climb up to the heavens by forming a pile of two or three mountains: see Homer *Od.* 11.305–320, Virgil *Aen.* 6.582–584, [Apollodorus] 1.7.4, Hyginus *Fab.* 28. Symmachus rationalizes the mythical version and pretends that what was erected was a poorly designed building, as if he were influenced by the story of the Tower of Babel.

⁹³ Straub 1986: 214 compares Symmachus' opinion that fortifications are offensive to Ammianus' descriptions of Valentinian's fortifications (28.2.2, 28.2.5, 30.7.6), which the historian describes as defensive.

compare mountain watch towers or the tall wonders cut from Egyptian rocks⁹⁴ or the pyramids' cornered peaks to the heights of the lofty city. If one were to ask the kings themselves, they will praise, by Hercules, what they would not have wanted established.⁹⁵ I myself observed ambiguous signs of fear and awe in the enemy; they comprehend the remarkable grandeur of the fortifications with such varied feelings that they cannot yet decide whether they ought to admire or fear it more.⁹⁶

23 I have said, venerable Augustus, that heaven aids your efforts. It is an easy assertion when we rely on the Rhine for corroboration; although it was filled with the runoff from Alpine snows, although it was compelled to overflow the confines of either bank, it preferred to go over to the victor's power. It turned away from barbarian soil and lay open its entire course to the prince in the manner of deserters going over to the other side. That overflow was not, if you believe me, hostile; with its slow procession through open spaces it came like a suppliant. We saw a surrender of waters very like the Nile's floods, by which arid Canopus and the soil of Memphis grow rich; that one too spreads out to be of service. There is another reason to make us more confident that this was done in a friendly spirit, that we have received the river Neckar as a kind of surety. Now it is less remarkable that the children of kings are offered you for treaties; and the Rhine would not, so to speak, rejoice in Roman peace if it had not handed over the neighboring stream like a hostage.⁹⁷

24 Let us expose⁹⁸ ancient monuments and explore the annals: you will find antiquity almost without knowledge of the rivers which you hold. Those very poets freely decked out with exotic names, though they have spread their poems out to Indian Ganges and Scythian Borysthenes, they have left in ignorant silence the Neckar, equal to the greatest.⁹⁹ Now for the first time a foreign¹⁰⁰ river is made known by your victories. Let it rejoice in its servitude: it has become noted after its capture.¹⁰¹ I perceive that the state is somehow enriched by the elements, since

⁹⁴ Obelisks: del Chicca 1974/75: 117 with notes.

⁹⁵ Kings of the Alamanni. Note the oddity of the mixed unreal and future condition, as in Claudius Mamertinus *P.L.* 3.10.1 (*Si quis mortalium in aliquam caelestem speculam nube sublatus ... uidisset ..., profecto mirabitur ... desiliet e nubibus et uiciniam caeli cupide derelinquet ut tuis, imperator, terris fruatur*).

⁹⁶ Cf. note 52 above: the Alamanni prevented the completion of one fortress on Mt. Pirus (Ammianus 28.2.5–9).

⁹⁷ This passage suggests that Symmachus has been describing a fortification at the confluence of the Rhine and Neckar (at Alta Ripa), described by Ammianus as involving setbacks and frustrations (28.2.2–4); Jullian 7.243–244 n. 3 (long) objects that the orator is in fact relating a number of events from the building activities of 369.

⁹⁸ For *ventilare* = "expose to the air [for notice, consideration]" cf., e.g., Apul. *Apol.* 100 *qui nomen tuum pro tribunalibus ventilavit*.

⁹⁹ Appropriately for the scale of the praise, Symmachus combines exaggeration of the Neckar's size and fanciful comparison to near-legendary geographical features.

¹⁰⁰ Not in the second century; it flows through the Agri Decumates. But if Symmachus means that the Neckar has not yet made an appropriate literary appearance, he may be right.

¹⁰¹ Ammianus 28.2.2 says that Valentinian decided to change the course of the Neckar in order to prevent the fort's foundations from being undermined by its flow. In the end, Roman

unknown rivers are subject and far off land is joined to it. While you were seeking the limits of the earth, you removed the limits of nations. Some small thing remains for nature which Rome as yet searches for.¹⁰² You believe the state regresses unless it is always advancing.¹⁰³

25 What if the establishment of fortifications were not to contain your onset? You do not know how to pass over deserted places. You have preferred diligence to ostentation, for swiftness is favorable to fame, fortification to stability.¹⁰⁴ I would complain, invincible consul,¹⁰⁵ that all places do not yet obey you, if I did not know that those which have been annexed have been made better.

26 I purposely pass over many things to keep the buskin¹⁰⁶ from bursting forth into poetic pride for egregious accomplishments. Out of many topics I shall touch upon one with a brief notice: the Rhine never before sailed upon easily has borne safe passages on its swollen waters. Like a path, boats fastened together and covered over with soil bit into the farthest part of the banks.¹⁰⁷ With the work of a single day the arrangement of the floating scaffold became strong. The men vied in playful jest to see from which direction the construction would arrive more quickly at the middle of the stream. Now let the distinguished author of the Trojan epic go¹⁰⁸ and pretend that the Xanthus was angered over the slaughter of its people,¹⁰⁹ let the elegant writer raise up billows straitened with corpses: he did not know that rivers can be bridled. Was the Ilian

construction prevailed over natural forces (28.2.3–4): *per multos enim dies compaginatae formae e roboribus, coniectaeque in alveum, fixis refixisque aliquotiens prope ingentibus stilis, fluctibus erectis confundebantur, avulsaeque vi gurgitis interibant. vicit tamen imperatoris vehementior cura et morigeri militis labor, mento tenus, dum operaretur, saepe demersi: tandem non sine quorundam discrimine castra praesidiaria, inquietudine urgentis amnis exempta, nunc valida sunt.* See also n. 44 above.

¹⁰² Commonplace of no boundary to empire save the geographical nature of the world; cf. *P.L.* 10.7.2.

¹⁰³ Ceaseless activity has described Maximian, *P.L.* 11.3.2 and Constantine, *P.L.* 12.22.1–2, and will characterize Theodosius, *P.L.* 2.10.1, although here Symmachus represents the Empire, not its ruler, as the entity that progresses.

¹⁰⁴ Valentinian's military operations did not extend far into the right bank of the Rhine; according to Drinkwater 1996: 25–26 and 1999: 448 he never intended them to.

¹⁰⁵ With this vocative, Symmachus reminds the audience of the occasion for the speech; he will soon turn to specific remarks about the emperor and his consulship.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. *Ep.* 10.2.5 *nos in agendis gratiis humile reptamus, socco magis idonei quam cothurno.* In Ammianus the buskin signals either tragedy (20.1.2, 28.1.4 [Phrynichus' *cothurnatus stilus*], 28.6.29) or behavior appropriate for a ruler (21.16.1 [*Constantius*] *imperatoriae auctoritatis cothurnum ubique custodiens*) or grandee (27.11.2 Petronius Probus, 28.4.27 a Roman senator who owes anyone money).

¹⁰⁷ This is an excellent brief description of a bridge of boats; Ammianus 29.4.2, writing of a later event, is far more brief (*tacite quantum concessit facultas, nequi conserendo officeret ponti, iunxit navibus Rhenum*).

¹⁰⁸ Pacatus uses the same phrase in 389 to dismiss mythological tales: *eat nunc sui ostentatrix uetustas et illa innumeris litterarum uulgata monimentis iactet exempla* (*P.L.* 2.17.1).

¹⁰⁹ *Il.* 21.211–382.

stream so mighty that Vulcan's flame was required for help? The deep has experienced what the shallow one escaped. The gods' defense itself does not deserve to be compared to your work.¹¹⁰ to have set a river on fire is vengeance, to have tread upon it is victory.

27 As I see it, eternal defender, your consciousness¹¹¹ is greater than the consulship. You possess what no other person can give you, a spirit loftier than rewards.¹¹² You should not for that reason think the state ungrateful: among the marks of honor for a citizen this is the greatest, but we acknowledge that it is inadequate for your merits. For the repaying of a service it is enough, if people cannot pay someone back what the service is worth, that at least the amount be paid¹¹³ . . . 3 folia

28 . . . from the source of the Rhine to the mouth of the ocean he has covered the river banks with a garland of military works.¹¹⁴ Who would believe that it was provided for as well that ports not be wanting? For where the region of the Nemetes extends,¹¹⁵ a circuit of walls appropriated the ebb of the river, with a small and limited entrance-way, to protect the exit of the anchorage from above with ramparts. Ships have, as it were, their own camp, and within a chamber of the Rhine the royal fleet is fitted out. The fence in the form of a theatre deceives those who look down from above, who do not know, when they see men traversing the surface, that they sail through the depths.

29 There remained, Augustus, more things to say, but among so many who write of your achievements I am unwilling to wrest the entirety from the rest. The intellects of every man owe to you the fact that they speak: let freedom of public eloquence resound in your presence, which you have restored, long an exile, to the tribunals!¹¹⁶ The veteran orator used to be listless in

¹¹⁰ A commonplace of excessive flattery: the Olympian gods may easily be slighted, as if they were handbook creatures produced only for the purposes of comparison; cf. *P.L.* 10.6.4–5, 11.10.5, 2.4.5.

¹¹¹ Cf. *P.L.* 11.4.3 *meritorum conscientia*; 9.12.2 *rarae atque inter paucissimos opes sunt contentae meritis conscientiae*; 4.7.4 *uictoriarum conscientia*.

¹¹² Cf. *P.L.* 11.6.5 *uester uero immortalis animus omnibus opibus omnique fortuna atque ipso est maior imperio*.

¹¹³ It is likely that there followed more on the utility of his building program, with details of other structures.

¹¹⁴ Cf. Ammianus 28.2.1: *Rhenum omnem a Raetiarum exordio, adusque fretalem Oceanum, magnis molibus communiebat, castra extollens altius et castella, turresque assiduas per habiles locos et opportunos, qua Galliarum extenditur longitudo*.

¹¹⁵ Pabst says the exact location is unknown but the general area is near Speyer. Lenski 2002: 144 n. 167 says this "bridgehead . . . has not been identified". Drinkwater 2007: 295–301 analyses Valentinian's defensive works supporting his naval strategy on the Rhine.

¹¹⁶ Like the praise of philosophy in Claudius Mamertinus *P.L.* 3.23.4–5 and Themistius *Or.* 5.63C; later Pacatus will claim that Theodosius has restored friendship (*P.L.* 2.16.2). Other parallels may be found in Pabst 151 ad loc. Here Symmachus asserts that Valentinian's successes have permitted orators to be truthful. Exactly what Symmachus refers to is a puzzle; there is a long discussion in Hall 192–194. He believes that this section refers to a law of 370 allowing *honorati* to practice law in the city of Rome (*CJ* 2.6.6). Mause 178 mentions Claudius

retirement; authority used to deny the duty (or vice versa) to those to whom nature had given eloquence. Nowhere was there greater silence than in the sanctuaries of letters. The same affliction of maintaining silence burdened men of varying ages, since the narrow limit curtailed the studies of beginners, long lack of practice spoilt the skill of older men. Accident ruled the outcome of suits: for what would you expect of an attorney who had this sole hope, that he was contending with a worse man? We did not doubt that one who was accustomed to ask counsel of those who left off had more prudence in accomplishing his business. You considered these wounds of an unhappy time while you kept watch over Alamannia, and when you bound the hands of the enemy you released the bonds of our tongues.¹¹⁷

30 This was in accord with your glory, in accord with your watchfulness and skillful management, that you enjoyed equal praise for both military and civil affairs. No arts are unpracticed, no activity flags; tongues apply themselves to laws, arms to the borders. It was right for you to restore its exercise to eloquence when you had already accomplished what was so often to be recorded. Silence is hostile to great deeds: what is glory if it is kept secret?¹¹⁸ You have as many witnesses as the intellects which you have freed. You have discovered, greatest of princes, another sort of laurel: while you explored the secrets of the world, while you erected not barracks but buildings in the innermost parts of foreign lands, you celebrated a triumph of peace.

31 Let others sing of what remains: I, as witness, shall perform my duty. I shall go through cities, I shall go through nations more boastful, having praised the victor; I shall say to the senate and people of Rome: "Send the fasces into new provinces, provide governors for across the Rhine."¹¹⁹ Of you, moreover, venerable Gratian,¹²⁰ I shall relate grand things, but I shall promise greater ones. The state will know that it is protected by twin guardians but generous as if to one, that two princes fight on a common tribute, that there are more necessary expenditures of labor than of money. This is the advantage of a felicitous age, to offer united allegiance to each and to

Mamertinus *P.L.* 3.4.3 in the same section where he discusses this passage, and a comparison with Julian's emphasis on fairness in the courts may be exactly Symmachus' point. Raimondi 144 n. 90 suggests that Symmachus alludes here, as in *Or.* 3.2, to the influence of Ausonius.

¹¹⁷ What Symmachus describes sounds like a worse case than nothing to praise. Just on the surface it seems as if Valentinian, having accomplished something actually praiseworthy, allowed people to praise him with honor rather than to lie; cf. Pliny on Domitian. Yet the point may be, as Hall believes, a veiled allusion to Julian's law forbidding Christians from teaching the classics.

¹¹⁸ C. Sogno n. 90 (p. 99) to p. 12 compares Horace *Odes* 4.9. Pabst compares Horace *C.* 4.8.22, Sallust *Cat.* 8, *P.L.* 5.9.1. Earlier, Cicero had argued (*Arch.* 20ff., especially 28–30) argued that the sharpest spur to the spirit was the promise that one's accomplishments would be remembered.

¹¹⁹ In *SHA Probus* 15 there is the text of a letter purported to have been sent to the senate by the emperor Probus announcing his victories in Germany, promising that the barbarians will now be plowing for the Romans and hastening to bear arms, if necessary, on their behalf. Thus far, the biographer has copied broadly from *P.L.* 8.9. Yet there is more, as Paschoud (commentary on the passage in the *Life of Probus* 2001: 115) suggests that the emperor's final comment, that he is not yet ready to send a governor to Germania (*Prob.* 15.7), is a correction of Symmachus' boast here.

¹²⁰ Still a child, named Augustus in 367 (*Ammianus* 27.6.4–13). He accompanied Valentinian on campaign against the Alamanni the following year (*Ammianus* 27.10.10). See *Or.* 3.

obtain separate benefits. What is paid is moderate because you take it together; what is accomplished is splendid because you both eagerly perform it.¹²¹

32 How much more frugal is the cultivation of your (pl.) deity than of the gods!¹²² Individual temples are established for them and each has his own altar. In my opinion, they preferred dissimilar rites, so that they not be forced into a society: no one may consecrate a couch for one of them with another; a Phrygian priest appeases this one, a pontifex this one; chaste mothers maintain those altars, a maiden adorned with fillet maintains these; so many flamines have taken different names so that they cannot be common to several gods. They have divided the very families of the nobility: Hercules has taken over the Pinarii, the Idaean mother chose the Scipios as hosts, the Julian house attended to the rites of Venus.¹²³ The expense has bankrupted almost the whole world because forms of adoration have filled it. The frugality of your rule is united, the majesty discrete; we who are ruled think that there is somehow one in you, when those who resist you perceive two.

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¹²¹ Cf. Lactantius *DMP* 7.2–3 on the quadruple expenses of the Tetrarchy. For Valentinian and Gratian there was only one court.

¹²² Note the attribution of *numina* to Christian emperors. But it is a comparison stretched — they have one court, each god has his own temple. Portmann 52–53 discusses the pagan senator's preoccupation with details of traditional cult.

¹²³ A commonplace topic which must have fallen upon willing ears. The panegyrist of Maximian in 289 also named the Pinarii as keepers of the cult of Hercules (*P.L.* 10.1.3). The Pinarii (a) seem no longer to have existed in Symmachus' time, (b) had not overseen the rites of Hercules for centuries. See F. Münzer, *RE* 20 (1950) s.v. Pinarius 1395-1397. The latest Pinarius in *RE* is P. Valens (no. 26), *patruus* (or *pater* or *parens*) of the emperor Pupienus: SHA (*Max-Balb*) 4.4, 5.5. The latest one before that (no. 25) lived in the time of Trajan. There are no Pinarii in *PLRE* I. For the selection, during the Second Punic war, of P. Cornelius Scipio Nasica as the man to receive the Idaean mother (the Magna Mater), see Livy 29.14. Julius Caesar traced his family's ancestry through Iulus (Ascanius) to Aeneas and Venus.

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