confessional) clerical interaction. Did the biblical model of "ordinary" apostles help mitigate elite disdain, or otherwise promote cooperation among clergy of different status groups? Although we lack answers to these questions, we owe thanks to Maxwell for prompting them, as well as for illuminating a striking and disturbing paradox within early Christianity.

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Julian and Christianity: Revisiting the Constantinian Revolution. By **David Neal Greenwood**. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2021. xii + 177 pp. $55.00 cloth.

David Greenwood's new analysis of Julian's reign establishes a convincing case for viewing the emperor's opposition to Christianity as a long-standing and aggressive feature of his time as Augustus (46)—in contrast to the prior idea that has seen Julian as initially tolerant towards Christians in his empire. Greenwood demonstrates across a number of important chapters that Julian's anti-Christian efforts were informed by a deep understanding of Christian theology, in particular contemporary trends in biblical interpretation and Christology, which appears to have been so profound that Julian was able to freely appropriate Christian elements into his reimagining of traditional myths about the gods (notably, Heracles, Ascelpius, Helios) and to parody biblical themes and motifs in accounts of his own life and upbringing (in his *To the Cynic Heracleios* [*Or.* 7]). Greenwood's monograph will interest not only scholars of Julian but also those interested in the development of imperial theology during the long third century. His work highlights effectively the extent to which Julian's efforts to restore the empire's traditional cults took direct inspiration from previous instances of religious syncretism, notably during the time of Diocletian and the first Tetrarchy, in order to fashion a response to Christianity which portrayed his uncle, Constantine I, as the principal "apostate" of the fourth century.

The scene-setting introduction broadly adheres to Julian's own account of his birth, upbringing, and imperial career, as outlined in his *Letter to the Athenians* and *Misopogon*. Greenwood notes appositely that scholarly concerns with Julian's pagan revival have tended to view his anti-Christian stance as a symptom of his proposed reformation, in the sense that Christianity was judged and found wanting. In contrast, Greenwood maintains that Julian's hostility to Christianity was a core feature of his promotion of Hellenic religion. Its role in Julian's revival was motivated, so Greenwood holds, by Julian's assessment of the hypocrisy and amorality of Constantine and his sons (notably, Constantius II), which he experienced personally with the murder of his father, Julius Constantius, his uncle, and his cousins (including the sitting Caesar, Dalmatius) during the dynastic purge in the high summer of 337. In this regard, Greenwood isolates "recapitulation and revenge" toward the Constantinian emperors as guiding features of Julian's promotion of Hellenic religion (17), and the emperor's recollections of Constantius II and Constantine are pursued

across chapters 1 and 2. While Julian's hostility to Constantius II was experiential, his dislike of Constantine was based on the immediate impact of his uncle's Christian empire and the disruption brought to the legacy of the Tetrarchic rulers who had preserved the authentic religious traditions of a pagan empire (32–33). Greenwood highlights the connection made by Julian between himself and Constantius I, as a guardian of pagan tradition (a worshipper of Helios, although disproved by Smith, *GRBS* 38 [1997] 187–208, not cited by Greenwood), thereby emphasising Julian's accusation that Constantine was "an aggressive apostate" (37). Greenwood argues that simply condemning Constantine's legacy ("*abolitio memoriae*") was not an option for Julian; instead, he drew on the biblical theme of *recapitulatio* (Eph. 1.10) to argue that his reign reversed the errors of Constantine, allowing him to be seen as "the righteous Herculian heir . . . [and] the new Diocletian" (40).

Chapters 3, 4 and 5 develop this argument with closer analysis of Julian's writings. These chapters are the book's strongest contribution to the study of Julian. Chapter 3's main concern appears to lie in proposing an earlier date for Julian's *Symposium* (*Caesars*), traditionally dated to Julian's stay in Antioch during December 362. Greenwood revisits the alternative date of December 361 during the sojourn in Constantinople and bases his argument on thematic continuities (51–53) relating to Julian's condemnation of Constantine and Constantius II in works penned between mid-361 to spring 362, notably the *Letter to the Athenians* and *Or.* 7. The point of this exercise is to demonstrate that Julian's anti-Christian stance was a feature of his reign from the beginning and that his hostility to it derived from his contempt for his family's dynastic machinations. The argument deployed is ingenious but not entirely convincing. More successful is chapter 4 where Greenwood assesses *Or.* 7 as a vehicle for Julian's promotion of Heracles, a divine figure of major significance for the conservator paradigm of the Tetrarchs (in particular, the line associated with Maximian and Constantius I) and Julian's assimilation of this figure with his own personality and role in the empire. Composed in spring 362, the work most likely benefitted from Julian's acquisition of the library of the murdered Alexandrian bishop, George, which he requested in his letter to Ecdicius at the beginning of that year. Greenwood's analysis puts beyond doubt the idea that Julian recast Heracles (219d–220a) as a Christ-like figure in terms of his origins and the trials to which he is subjected, which Julian achieved by borrowing from a variety of biblical and patristic-era works to establish the correspondence. The autobiographical myth that lies at the heart of *Or.* 7 (227c–234d) carries over the correspondence whereby Julian casts himself as a saviour figure, the offspring of Helios and Athene, enduring trials and tribulations (cf. Mt. 4.1–10), before returning to cleanse impiety from the globe and restore the honor of his ancestral house. Chapter 5 considers two works composed during his time in Antioch toward the end of 362 and early 363, which were set against the background of Antioch's Christian factionalism and the emperor's own failure to ingratiate himself with the inhabitants of the famous city. The role of Asclepias in the *Hymn to King Helios* followed a similar appropriative line as Heracles in *Or.* 7, where Asclepias is cast as another Savior figure using imagery drawn from the New Testament, a parallel maintained in the overtly hostile *Against the Galileans*, which however also subtly utilized incarnational language exemplified by the Nicene Creed to flesh out Asclepias' savior role. The casting of Julian by his supporters as a figure bringing spiritual health to the cities of the empire (e.g., Himerius, *Or.* 41.8), as Asclepius incarnate, exemplified the paradigm of divine adoption evident in these particular works produced in

Antioch, which, Greenwood argues, intentionally sought to displace the Eusebian model of Constantine as the imperial conduit of the Christian God with Julian "as an earthly avatar" of Helios (89).

The remaining chapters evaluate the impact of Julian's anti-Christian stance on the architecture of Constantinople (chp. 6), on the empire's legal and cultural landscapes (chp. 7), and on the environment of Antioch and Jerusalem (chp. 8). The conclusion reiterates the principal contribution of this study, namely that the emperor's polemic drew heavily on Christian texts and traditions in order to blunt the belief in Christian exceptionalism, a notion which had intensified with the imperial adoption of Christianity by Julian's uncle. While aspects of Greenwood's thesis are denuded of their persuasive appeal simply as a result of trying to cover too much ground, his study should be viewed as a major new contribution to Julianic studies and, more broadly, to the study of religion in the fourth century.

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The Idea of Nicaea in the Early Church Councils, AD 431–451. By **Mark S. Smith**. Oxford Early Christian Studies. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2018. 256 pp. $85.00 hardback.

In his *The Pillar and Ground of Truth* (1914), the great Russian polymath Fr Pavel Florensky wrote in glowing terms of the momentous achievement of the Council of Nicaea: "The whole power of the mysterious dogma is at once established by the one word ὁμοούσιος.… It is impossible to mention without reverent fear and holy trepidation that moment—infinitely significant and unique in its philosophical and dogmatic importance—when the thunder of «Ὁμοούσιος» first roared over the City of Victory." While such an expansive declaration may well be seen to have been justified over the longer term, Mark Smith pursues a very different tack in demonstrating quite how much the establishment of Nicaea as a central and immovable foundation of Christian doctrine owed to a long process of negotiation, intrigue, and development. He dissects with great skill the complex processes whereby fidelity to Nicaea became a fixed *desideratum* even as the precise interpretation of Nicaea shifted and evolved. Far from assuming a simple change of topic from Trinitarian theology in the councils of the fourth century to Christology in those of the fifth, Smith shows quite how inseparable these dogmatic *loci* are in Christian thinking. Perhaps most importantly, Smith performs an invaluable service in demonstrating the remarkable extent to which the doctrinal disputes of the era of Ephesus and Chalcedon were governed and shaped by a competition to secure the mantle and legacy of Nicaea.

Smith is surely right in drawing attention to ambiguities and even insufficiencies of Nicaea. The council did its job very effectively in its proclamation of the perfect divinity of the Son and his unity with the Father as an essential foundation of the Christian promise of salvation. It did not, however, ascribe any very positive content to the meaning of the term ὁμοούσιος, nor did it specify the manner of the Son's