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Christian Tools in Traditionalist Texts

Vat. Reg. Lat. 2077 is a sixth-century codex comprising Eusebius of Caesarea's *Chronicon*, Gennadius of Massila's supplement to Jerome's *On Eminent Men*, and Vegetius's *Epitome of Military Science*: an encyclopedic handbook written sometime in the late fourth or early fifth century "for the Emperor Theodosius."[1] It is an odd collection of materials. The codex includes works ranging from historical chronicle to military history, framed by an opening request and closing invocation visible today only under ultraviolet light. On the first sheet of the manuscript, in the upper right margin before the first text's incipit, the scribe responsible for the body text wrote a small note that reads "Christ give help (*Christe adiuba*)!"[2] and at the end, trailing the final piece of scholarship in the codex, "Christ give help to the one desiring to know you (*Christe adiuba desiderantem te nosse*)."[3] This scribe responsible for collecting these

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[1] *Ad Theodosium imperatorem*. The inscription is ambiguous as to which "Emperor Theodosius" the work is dedicated. On dating see Seeck, "Die Zeit des Vegetius" and Goffart, "The Date and Purpose of Vegetius' 'De re militari'".

[2] I have translated the regularized spelling of *adiuva*. *Adiuba* is nonsensical, and late ancient scribes regularly substitute V for B – especially in scribal notes. See, for instance, Codex Puteans (BnF Lat. 5730, TM 66692) in which the early fifth-century (contemporary) corrector repeatedly uses *recognobi* for *recognovi*.

[3] The note is briefly described by Troncarelli, "Osservazioni sul Reginense latino 2077," 94. The phrase is found regularly in late ancient marginalia, for instance in the seventh-century overtext of Vat. Pal. Lat. 2077, which has a chart of heresies the bottom left of which reads *XPE adiuba desiderante(m) te nosse*, with a superlinear stroke over XPE (*Christe*) indicating the *nomen sacrum* and the final M on *desiderantem* marked out with a superlinear stroke. The abiding scholastic provenance of this palimpsest is further demonstrated its undertext: one of the earliest copies of Cicero's *In Verrem*.

works of Theodosian Age scholarship together into a single codex began and concluded the work with an invocation to the deity and an invitation to the reader: read these texts with the help of and desire to know Christ. My suggestion – that texts of Theodosian Age scholarship are rightly read within a Christian scholastic context – is not an etic heuristic: this manuscript of Vegetius quite literally has a Christian frame. The manuscript is not unique, either; as mentioned in Chapter 5, the so-called Bodmer Thucydides from the fourth century CE is in fact part of a larger codex including material from the biblical books of Daniel and Susannah, and apparently originating in a Christian monastery.[4] Even for elite and theologically interested Christians during the Theodosian Age and after, the collocation of Christian and Traditionalist materials, or biblical and secular, was no apparent cause for concern.[5]

Apart from being bound together, manuscripts of Theodosian Age scholarship show signs of production by and for Christians, using tools, framing devices, shortcuts, and notational forms known only from Christian scribal practices. Later I discuss a codex of Livy that boasts all of these, along with one copy of Vergil that uses peculiarly Christian formulae for writing the name of the deity, and another which was apparently copied in an Italian scriptorium that produced Traditionalist classics such as the *Aeneid* alongside one of the most exquisite biblical manuscripts to survive from antiquity. Our earliest extant copy of the *Theodosian Code*, too, uses staurograms as binders' marks, and a papyrus with quotations from the jurists Papinian, Ulpian, and Paul employs scribal tools known only from Christian manuscripts.

This chapter investigates manuscripts in which scribes copied non-Christian works using Christian scribal tools. I describe the proliferation of Christian scribal practices through products of Theodosian Age scriptoria in order to trace the influence of Christianity in a manner that does not involve speculation about the faith of the scribes of these texts or these texts' users. One main argument of this book is that argumentative tools which were initially devised for internal use in Christian theological disputation came uncoupled from the ideology of their producers. Legal

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[4] Nongbri, *God's Library*, 208–211.
[5] It is possible that Vegetius was a Christian, though scholars argue the point on scant grounds: in his *Epitome of Military Science* 2.5 he describes soldiers swearing by "God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit," in 4.35 the author appears to refer to the date of Easter, and in 4.40 he mentions "God the Creator." Milner, *Vegetius: Epitome of Military Science*, xxxi–xxxvii. Vegetius the person may have been a Christian, but his work is not theological in nature.

scholars, miscellanists, and historians used tools from Christian disputation in a manner that concealed the tools' history. I have argued that during the Theodosian Age argumentative forms such as aggregation and distillation were generalized, designified, and reused. Manuscripts from the Theodosian Age show that originally Christian scribal tools such as *nomina sacra* and even peculiarly Christian symbols such as christograms did not long remain uniquely Christian. Scholastic exchange did not occur solely in the heady, refined space of argumentative forms. It also happened on the space of the page. The generalization of originally Christian scribal tools, and their reuse in works of no obvious theological import, is another important aspect of Christianization in the Theodosian Age that can help us to describe what it means for a society to "become Christian" without recourse to spiritual renewal, moral change, or demographic flux.

NOMINA SACRA AND NOMINA VULGARIA

Ancient scribes employed a range of tools to simplify their texts, to remove extraneous verbiage, and to save space on parchment, papyrus, or stone. Often final a *N* or *M* in Latin manuscripts, or final *Nu* in Greek, is indicated simply with a short supralinear stroke.[6] Especially in late ancient legal manuscripts, common words are often abbreviated with a stroke across the descender: for instance ₱ for "per."

Scribal tools utilizing supralinear strokes fall into two broad categories: abbreviations and contractions. "Supralineate abbreviations" simply omit letters from the word, generally those letters after the first one or two, and indicate the omission with a small stroke above the word in question.[7] The other broad category comprises "supralineate

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[6] This type of abbreviation is most commonly employed at the end of lines, but is not exclusively employed in this way. For one example of a final M indicated with a supralinear stroke in the middle of a line, see Figure 29.

[7] "Non," for instance, becomes N̄. Supralineate abbreviations show up somewhat earlier in the Greek corpus, but still are often reserved for titles. See, for instance, *IG II²* 4215, an inscription from the Theater of Dionysus in Athens (inventory NK276) honoring Tiberius Claudius Callippianus Italicus that reads Τ̄ιβ · Κ̄λ ·Καλλιππιανὸν Ἰταλικόν. It is notable here that (1) the name is only partially abbreviated, (2) the words with supralinear strokes are not inflected (making them abbreviations rather than contractions), and (3) the scribe has indicated the abbreviation in two different ways – with supralinear strokes as well as with small diamonds after the first two parts of the name. As Michael Avi-Yonah points out, most Greek inscriptions before the fourth century, when they indicate contractions, do so with diamonds, dots, wedges, or the like, rather than supralinear strokes. Avi-Yonah,

contractions," in which letters are omitted from the middle of a word that remains inflected and identified with a supralinear stroke.[8]

The most recognizably Christian scribal practice is the use of so-called *nomina sacra*: supralineate contractions that are traditionally restricted to a relatively circumscribed set of lemmata. The peculiarly Christian nature of *nomina sacra* in literary texts has been widely recognized since the pioneering work of Ludwig Traube in the late nineteenth century, and a number of studies have followed up on Traube's conclusions about the Jewish origin of this scribal practice and its expression in early Christian manuscripts.[9] Arthur E. Gordon traced the use of supralineate abbreviations and supralineate contractions in the *CIL*,[10] and concluded that the corpus leads one to "observes how late contraction is in beginning and how few there are in comparison with [abbreviations]; also how preponderantly Christian it is in its application."[11] The earliest securely dated use of *nomina sacra* in a literary context occurs in P. Dura 24,[12] and they arrive in the Latin epigraphic record only with an epigram of Damasus from the late fourth century.[13]

Abbreviations in Greek Inscriptions (the Near East, 200 B.C.–A.D. 1100), 29–38. The use of both in this case may indicate the relative obscurity of the supralinear stroke to indicate abbreviations still in the late second/early third century CE, to which this inscription is dated.

[8] In Greek, for instance, Θεός will become $\overline{\Theta\Sigma}$ in the nominative, or $\overline{\Theta Y}$ in the genitive, both accompanied by a supralinear stroke. The same occurs in Latin – Deus will become $\overline{DI}$ in the genitive, or $\overline{DO}$ in the dative.

[9] Traube, *Nomina Sacra: Versuch einer Geschichte der christlichen Kurzung*. See especially pp. 133ff. See also Paap, Nomina Sacra *in the Greek Papyri* and Hurtado, "The Origin of the *Nomina Sacra*: A Proposal."

[10] Gordon worked from the *CIL* as published before 1936: that is, the 8,622 inscriptions in volumes 1–15, as well as the supplemental material from military diplomas included in volume 16. For a justification of his method, see Gordon, *Supralineate Abbreviations in Latin Inscriptions*, 60–62.

[11] Gordon's text says "suspension," but his language throughout is inconsistent – he uses "suspension" and "abbreviation" interchangeably. I have substituted "abbreviation" for the sake of consistency with my terminology. Gordon, *Supralineate Abbreviations*, 109.

[12] TM 61914, with a *terminus ante quem* of 256 due to the fragment's discovery in the ruins of Roman Dura. *Nomina sacra* appear in the graffiti at Dura dated to 232–233, as well, though without a supralinear stroke. Rostovtzeff and Baur, *Excavations at Dura-Europos, Report for 1931/2*, 241. Per Avi-Yonah, "[s]uch unmarked *nomina sacra* continue to crop up in the course of centuries, but they probably represent little more than individual freaks." Avi-Yonah, *Abbreviations*, 27. Other biblical papyri paleographically dated to the second and third centuries use the technology as well, though their dates are less secure.

[13] *Damasi Epigrammata* (ed. Ihm), no. 12, line 5 (p. 18, plate 4). The next earliest dated Latin use of a *nomen sacrum* for *deus* (in Latin) comes from a votive dated to 408 from
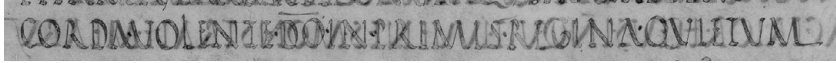
FIGURE 21. Vat. Lat. 3867, 86r. *Aeneid* 1.303, where $\overline{DO}$ expands to *d(e)o* in *corda volente deo; in primus regina quietum.*

Yet, during the Theodosian Age and immediately thereafter, this markedly Christian scribal practice found its way into wider usage among nontheological works, as did the practice of contracting words such as *deus* when the term refers transparently to traditional gods of Rome and not to the Christian god. The so-called *Roman Vergil* dates paleographically to the later fifth century: perhaps as early as the late Theodosian Age, though more likely in the decades following.[14] It is among the most beautiful illustrated manuscripts of Late Antiquity, and along with the *Vatican Vergil* is one of only two illustrated manuscripts to survive of antiquity's most famous poet.[15] The first folio of this fifth-century luxury copy includes a beautiful miniature depicting the two main characters in Vergil's first *Eclogue*, and underneath a striking scribal form: a *nomen sacrum* in line 6, which reads "Oh Meliboee, a g(o)d has created this leisure for us" (Figure 21).[16]

Traube rightly recognized that a contracted, supralineate form of *deus* is a remarkably odd usage for this text. It seems that the scribe thought so, too; when the copyist transcribed the next line of their exemplar, they chose a more obvious form: *deus* in plene form, without contraction. In fact, only twice in this codex of 309 folia does the single scribe use a *nomen sacrum.*[17] In his own analysis of this strange usage, Traube

Mercha-Sfa, in modern day Algeria. *CIL* VIII 2551. While I have focused here on Latin *exempla*, the pattern largely holds for Greek inscriptions as well. There appears to be only one Traditionalist Greek inscription that uses a *nomen sacrum*: $\overline{\Theta\Omega}$ for θεῷ in W. H. Waddington and Philippe Le Bas 2455, from 207 CE. Avi-Yonah rightly notes that this is perhaps an accident, and further that in the Greek epigraphic corpus, "the development of contractions can be divided in to two distinct periods: the pagan and the Christian. The contractions in both periods differ in quantity, technique, and subject-matter." Avi-Yonah, *Abbreviations*, 25–26.

14 Vat. Lat. 3867 (TM 62975). See Lowe *CLA* 1.19, Seider, "Beiträge zur Geschichte und Paläographie der antiken Vergilhandschriften," 144–147 for an analysis of the paleography, as well as Steffens, *Paléographie latine*, pl. 19.

15 Vat. Lat. 3225 (TM 65873) On the relationship between the text and the illustration in this codex see Weitmann, "Bilder als Vergegenwärtigung des Textes," 2–4.

16 *O Meliboee, d(eu)s nobis haec otia fecit.* Vergil, *Eclogue* 1.6.

17 Other places where they might have used *nomina sacra* have no such forms. See, for instance, *Eclogue* 5.64 on 13r which reads *deus deus ille* in plene form, or *Georgics* 2.392 on 56v, in which an abbreviation renders *et quocumque deus* as *ETQUOCUMQ:DEUS.*

remarked that "[the scribe's] intention was to keep the classical text free from Christian abbreviations, but in these two places the habitual form has escaped his stylus," presuming that in this instance, a slip of the pen betrayed the scribe as a Christian: "Perhaps it was a monk."[18]

Perhaps it *was* a monk. But such a presumption is just that: something that the historian might assume based on the scribe's use of a form typically reserved for biblical manuscripts and theological tractates. Because it seems certain that this scribe had used *nomina sacra* before taking up the task of copying a luxury edition of Vergil's works, the most likely explanation is surely, per Traube, that "in these two places the habitual form has escaped his stylus." But suggestions of a theological commitment underlying this bit of scribal somnambulism are less secure and less plausible. Biblical transcription does not a Christian make, just as the fifth-century philosopher Marius Victorinus argued that presence or absence from a Church building did not reveal interesting information about an individual's beliefs.[19] Instead, I suggest and argue at length later, this manuscript was produced in an environment so thoroughly Christianized that scribal practices that were once the strict purview of Christian texts had become a generalized tool of the trade.[20]

The scribe in question is not committed to plene forms (*M* and *N* at the end of lines, for instance, are almost always abbreviated with a supralinear stroke) but they only employ *nomina sacra* twice. One might expect to find *nomina sacra* in *Eclogue* 4 if anywhere, given the subject matter and its common reinterpretation in Late Antiquity as presaging the coming of the Christ child. (See, for instance, Lactantius, *Divine Institutes* 7.24 and Constantine's *Speech to the Assembly of the Saints* preserved in Eusebius, *Life of Constantine* 4.32.) But there are no ancient manuscripts of *Eclogue* 4 that contain any such form.

[18] Traube, "Das Alter des Codex Romanus des Virgil," 312.

[19] Reported in Augustine, *Confessions* 8.2(4), and discussed in Chapter 1.

[20] By way of comparison, the *Palatine Vergil* (Cod. Pal. Lat. 1631, TM 65875) which dates paleographically to the same period almost certainly comes from the same scriptorium and contains the same text on 1r but does not use a *nomen sacrum*. See McCormick, *Five Hundred Unknown Glosses from the Palatine Virgil: The Vatican Library, MS. Pal. Lat. 1631*, 3n7, and Pratesi, "Nuove divagazioni per uno studio della scrittura capitale. I 'codices Vergiliani antiquiores'," 19–28. Pratesi argues for a sixth-century date for the *Roman Vergil* on the basis of its use of *nomina sacra*, asserting that the scribal tool indicates that "the codex cannot be assigned to the fourth or even the fifth century" (22) – an unconvincing argument given that it is based on no data whatsoever. Eduard Norden argued for a late fifth-century *terminus post quem* based on an interpolation apparently attributable to Priscian, but the intriguing suggestion remains unconvincing because it is based again on assertions which have no obvious data to support them, for instance that "a few decades must have passed" between Priscian and the copying of the manuscript in which his influence is apparent. Norden, "Das Alter des Codex Romanus Vergils," 473–474.

Literature is not the only domain where Christian scribal tools were reused during the Theodosian Age. There is, in fact, a juristic papyrus from the period that uses the tool of supralineate contractions – *nomina sacra* – in a rather less spiritual manner. It employs, one might say, *nomina vulgaria*. *P. Haun* III 45, along with fragments belonging to the Arangio-Ruiz private collection (*CPL* 73 A, B), comprises an ancient handbook on the topics of legacies (*legati*) and trusts (*fideicommissa*): a work of scholarship bringing together opinions of the five jurists mentioned in the *Law of Citations* under useful thematic groupings.[21] The compiler of this text is unknown, but there is reason to believe that it was originally put together in the late third or early fourth century, and that this copy was produced in the late fourth or early fifth.[22]

The juristic opinions included were previously lost to posterity; they were not transmitted in the *Digest* or any of the late antique compilations.[23] For this reason, the legal content of the papyrus has received the

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[21] The text itself is a collection of papyri from the same fourth-century codex, including one large sheet in two columns, two smaller but still substantial fragments, and a number of scraps. It was initially published by Arangio-Ruiz, "Frammenti papiracei di un'opera della giurisprudenza," and has been republished many times since, including in *CPL* 73, Larsen and Bülow-Jacobsen, *P. Haun III: Subliterary texts and Byzantine documents from Egypt*, 11–23, and most recently in Nasti, *Papyrus Hauniensis de legatis et fideicommissis: pars prior: PHaun.III 45 recto + CPL 73 A e B recto*. It is unclear whether this is a contiguous codex or an opisthograph containing two similar juristic texts. The answer to this question, for the purpose of my argument, is irrelevant. My conclusions hold for both sides of all fragments.

[22] On the basis of a clear paleographic connection with *P. Rylands* III 472, Serena Ammirati suggests a date toward the end of the fourth century. Ammirati, *Sul libro latino antico*, 87. Her assessment agrees with that of Lowe (*CLA* Supplement 1756), and Nasti, "Nuovi dati da PHaun. III 45 + CPL 73 A, B e la codificazione giustinianea: Dissentiens prudentium e l'opera dei compilatori in tema di alienazione della res legata," 3. For his part, Detlef Liebs dates the text itself to sometime between 213 and 326 and suggests that the papyrus needn't be understood as being copied significantly later than its composition. Furthermore, he cites *CTh* 1.4.1 (a constitution of Constantine calling for the destruction of the *notae* of Ulpian and Paul on Papinian) as a *terminus ante quem* for the text's composition and copying into these fragments on the basis that it is unlikely that a jurist would produce a text such as this after the order to destroy such sources. The fact that notes which were supposed to be "destroyed" were nevertheless reissued around the year 500 (*CLA* 1037/Berlin Staatliche Museen P. 6762, Berlin Staatliche Museen P. 6763, Paris Louvre 7153/TM 62356, published by Paul Krüger, in *Collectio librorum iuris anteiustiniani*, 3.285–296) suggests that the *notae* indeed continued to circulate; Liebs's *terminus ante quem* is hardly compelling, and the argument was succinctly put to rest already before Liebs's edition by D'Ippolito and Nasti, "Diritto e papiri: nuovi pareri giurisprudenziali da P. Haun. III 45," 154. Liebs, "P.Haun. 45 + P.Festschr.Schulz Bruchstücke einer Schrift eines römischen Juristen der Generation nach Ulpian."

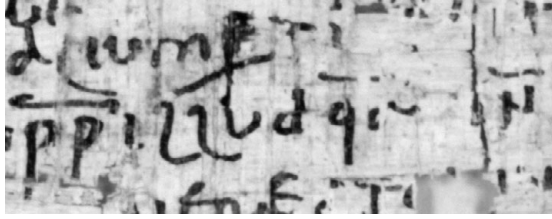[23] Arangio-Ruiz, "Frammenti," 6. See also Liebs, "P.Haun. 45," 489–490.

FIGURE 22. *P. Haun* III 45, selection from lines 85 and 86, infrared photograph. In the center of the upper line we see a P with an ascending line across the descender indicating *per*, and on the second line $\overline{PP}$, $\overline{QA}$ and $\overline{N}$ for *propter*, *quia*, and *non*, respectively. Line numbers are according to Larsen and Bülow-Jacobsen. Photos courtesy Adam Bülow-Jacobsen.

vast majority of critical attention, and its form and scribal peculiarities have gone largely unremarked upon.

The scribal peculiarities of this papyrus are astonishing. The manuscript was likely that of a scholar,[24] and incorporates both traditional supralineate abbreviations, for instance $P\overline{P}$ for *propter*, $Q\overline{A}$ for *quia*, and N̄ for *non*, as well as other typical juristic abbreviations such as P with an ascending stroke across the descender for *per* (Figure 22).[25] But this papyrus contains not only traditional scribal abbreviations that we might cluster under the loose heading *notae iuris*, it also includes supralineate *contractions* of common words.[26] It contains, in other words, the type of scribal tool that papyrologists typically cluster under the heading *nomina sacra*. Supralineate contractions in this papyrus has gone largely

[24] Given the *Law of Citations*, this papyrus is unlikely to have been intended as a juristic manual for practice, and therefore must be scholastic. Nasti, "Teodosio II, Giustiniano, Isidoro e il divieto di adoperare 'siglae'." The brief interlinear and marginal notes in this papyrus suggest that it was used for study in some capacity, though the fragmentary nature of the piece makes more specific speculation as to use difficult. See also D'Ippolito and Nasti, "Diritto e papiri," 154.

[25] Steffens catalogued the typical juristic abbreviations (*notae iuris*) in *Paléographie latine*, XXXIII. For *fideicommissorum* he lists $\overline{FIDC}$ – that is, an abbreviation and not a contraction. Steffens's table is handwritten and takes examples from manuscripts through the middle ages; it is hardly useful for identifying shifts in juristic notation over time. These juristic abbreviations, it should be noted, are not the same as were detailed by Probus in his *De notis antiquis*, which provide expansions for the abbreviation of phrases, for instance *STA* as *s(ine) t(utoris) a(uctoritate)*. (*De notis* 5.17) or *SSCSDETV* for *s(ecundum) s(uam) c(ausam) s(icuti) d(ixi) e(cce) t(ibi) v(indicta)*. (*De notis* 4.6) Text Mommsen, *M. Valerius Probus: De notis antiquis*, 119–127.

[26] Further discussion of supralineate abbreviations and contractions in juristic manuscripts can be found in Schiaparelli, "Note paleografiche: Segni tachigrafici nelle Notae Ivris," 267–272.

FIGURE 23. *P. Haun* III 45, selection from line 65, infrared photograph. The line reads $\overline{FC}RIUS$ *EO* q, with a supralinear stroke over the *FC* and an ascending stroke through the descender of the *Q*. Expanded, the phrase is *f(idei)c(ommissa) rius eo q(uod)*.
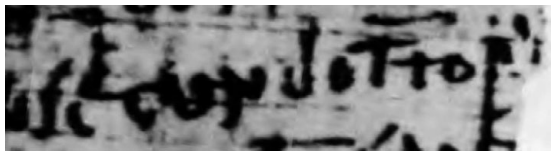

FIGURE 24. *CPL* 73 B *recto*, detail reading *SECUNDO* $\overline{TTO}$ *RE. From line 70 as published in Nasti, corresponding to the lacuna in line 60 of Larsen and Bülow-Jacobsen. This fragment is in the Arangio-Ruiz collection and the photo is from* CLA *Supplement 1756.*

unnoticed by the broader public because no editor – and there have been five – offers anything but the most cursory remarks on them.[27] Nevertheless, there they are. Consider, for instance, Figure 23, in which the scribe of this papyrus abbreviates *fideicommissarius* as $\overline{FC}RIUS$. Throughout this papyrus a specific set of lemmata relating to the subject under discussion (*testamentum*, *fideicommissum*, and *heres*) are consistently contracted, marked by a supralinear stroke, and inflected. Figure 24, for instance, shows the contraction of *testamentum* inflected in the ablative to read *TT(AMENT)O*.

   This papyrus presents the earliest example of supralineate contractions in a juristic context (Figures 25 and 26). In fact, it presents the earliest use of supralineate contractions in any Latin manuscript that does not present

[27] Arangio-Ruiz, Cavenaile, and Liebs do not even identify the supralinear strokes in their editions, preferring simply to expand the contractions. The abbreviations were noted by Larsen and Bülow-Jacobsen in their edition, but only as "Kürzungen (die sogenannten *notae juris*), die derselben Art wie die sonst gebrauchten sind, s. Steffens, *Lateinische Paläographie*." Larsen and Bülow-Jacobsen, *P. Haun* III 11. Additionally, they helpfully indicate the supralinear strokes in the apparatus that follows their transcription. The most recent editor of the papyri, Fara Nasti, discusses the use of supralinear abbreviations and contractions (see for instance, *Papyrus Hauniensis*, 34–35) but offers that the presence of these tools points only to "un uso tecnico del testo, scolastico, pratico o di cancelleria." Nasti, *Papyrus Hauniensis de legatis et fideicommissis*, 40.

Manuscript Reading	Expansion	Lines attested
$\overline{AT}$	a(u)t(em)	37
$\overline{D}$	d(iuum)	40
$\overline{E}$	e(st)	2, 16
$\overline{FC}$	f(idei)c(omissum)	38, 39, 45, 46
$\overline{MGE}$	m(a)g(is) e(st)	70
$\overline{N}$	n(on)	24, 44, 45, 55, 86
$\overline{P}$	p(rae)	3
$\overline{PP}$	p(ro)p(ter)	38, 86
$\overline{POMP}$	Pomp(onius)	15
$\overline{QD}$	q(ui)d(em)	96
$\overline{TM}$	t(a)m(en)	85
$\overline{TMN}$	t(a)m(en)	70
$\overline{U}$	u(el)	5, 13, 18, 19, 44

FIGURE 25. Supralineate abbreviations in *P. Haun* III 45 identified by Larsen and Bülow-Jacobsen. Line numbers follow their edition.[28]

explicitly Christian content. In addition, the closest paleographical parallel to this papyrus is not another juristic fragment but *P. Rylands Greek 472*: among the earliest known Latin Christian papyri.[29] Serena Ammirati argues persuasively that these two manuscripts must be understood as arising out of a similar, bureaucratic – to which I would add scholastic – context. "Books of law represent the specific professional interests of individuals who are simultaneously producers and users of Latin books with literary content. If the users of books containing literary and juristic

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[28] Nasti, *Papyrus Hauniensis*, 35–40, suggests a different typology of abbreviations in this papyrus, with another category of "troncamenti sillabici" which includes the uninflected form of *f(idei)c(omissum)* abbreviated as $\overline{FC}$, along with, for instance, *q(uae)rit* abbreviated as $\overline{QRIT}$. This separate category of "syllabic truncations" would be more defensible if the same words were not also inflected differently in the same papyrus, as for instance *f(idei)c(omissa)rii* is rendered as $\overline{FCRII}$, and *q(uae)ritur* as $\overline{QRITUR}$.

[29] This Latin fragment has a Greek catalogue number because it is conserved under glass with another fragment, *P. Ryl. Gr. 473*, a second- or third-century copy of Sallust's *Histories* (needless to say, also Latin) which was reused on the verso to copy a Greek astrological treatise from Oxyrhynchus, catalogued as *P. Ryl. Gr. 527*. Larsen and Bülow-Jacobsen initially proposed the paleographical comparison in their edition of *P. Haun* III 45. See also a stronger restatement of the parallel by Ammirati, "Per una storia del libro latino antico," 72.

Manuscript Reading	Expansion	Lines attested
E̅E̅	e(ss)e	45
F̅C̅RII	f(idei)c(omissa)rii	56
F̅C̅RIUM	f(idei)c(omissa)rium	37
F̅C̅RIUS	f(idei)c(omissa)rius	65
F̅C̅ORUM	f(idei)c(omissari)orum	60
H̅DEM	h(ere)dem	31, 64, 82
H̅RES	h(er)es	20, 65(?)
H̅TAS	h(eredi)tas	80
H̅TE	h(eredita)te	71
H̅TEM	h(eredita)tem	81
Q̅A	q(ui)a	11, 13, 47, 58, 75, 81, 86
Q̅D	q(ui)d	17
Q̅RIT	q(uae)rit	20, 55
Q̅RITUR	q(uae)ritur	104
T̅T̅O	t(estamen)to	17, 23, 31, 60

FIGURE 26. Supralineate contractions in *P. Haun* III 45 identified by Larsen and Bülow-Jacobsen. Line numbers follow their edition.

content belong to the same professional category, it is reasonable to expect that these books would share formal characteristics."[30]

Christians are the ultimate source for such a thoroughgoing and standardized use of supralineate contractions; by the time that the scribe of *P. Haun* III 45 put pen to papyrus they had been used in biblical manuscripts for over 200 years. A full account of this papyrus, however, will identify the *proximate* source for this scribe to import the technology of supralineate contractions into the juristic domain. The cluster of coincidences – a Theodosian date, the closest parallel being a Latin Christian liturgical fragment, and the bureaucratic or scholastic environment of both papyri – suggests that this papyrus presents precisely the reuse of the technology of *nomina sacra* in a juristic context.[31] The distinction that I draw here,

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[30] Ibid.

[31] Franz Steffens too suggested that the use of supralineate contracted forms (and especially when inflected, as in his "Group 3") in juristic texts is the result of Christian forms of contraction finding their way into juristic materials. He simply did not have the manuscript evidence to support his claim, which is now available in *P. Haun* III 45. Steffens, *Paléographie latine*, xxxiii.

between traditional juristic abbreviations and these new contracted forms, may seem to be inconsequential, or at least too arcane to offer fruitful insights into Late Antiquity. Quite the opposite is true. The use of this peculiarly Christian tool in a context so remote from theological study shows that in the Theodosian Age, what used to be the oddities of Christian scribal practice were no longer odd, nor were they particularly Christian in implementation or meaning. A scribe implemented a tool invented for biblical manuscripts to simplify a legal handbook. We cannot see into the mind behind the pen, nor can we probe the propositional truths held by these scribes. What they believed is inaccessible, but perhaps it is also not particularly interesting. What is clear is that the scribe of *P. Haun* III 45, and the scribe of the *Roman Vergil* mentioned earlier, appropriated a tool that was once the solely purview of theological works and applied it in a new context with new aims.

A late ancient reader may well have approached these manuscripts with the same historical incredulity expressed by Traube and others regarding the use of a "Christian" tool in a "Pagan" context. An ancient reader might also have passed over these *nomina vulgaria* without giving them a second thought, as has been the case for most modern editors of the Haun papyrus. But there is another way to read these manuscripts. If we assume that the scribe was in fact a Christian, and purposefully used a theological tool while copying a Traditionalist text, then we can speak of ideological and textual "Christianization" happening in late antique scriptoria. If, on the other hand, these scribes made casual mistakes or technological transpositions, unintentionally inserting tools from Christian scribal practice into nontheological texts, then we can speak of the technological "Christianization" of late antique scriptoria still. In the latter case the point is doubly made: during the Theodosian Age, in nontheological manuscripts, scribes began to use tools that were forged in scriptural fires and they applied these tools without obvious implication. The fact that *nomina sacra* and *nomina vulgaria* appear at all attests to the thoroughgoing Christianity of the scholarly and scribal context, quite apart from the beliefs of any of these texts' producers. Scribes reusing Christian tools and symbols in nontheological contexts is interesting if it is value laden – if the producers of texts intend to "Christianize" manuscripts of non-Christian texts. But it is perhaps more interesting if the importation of *nomina sacra*, and the other symbols of Christianity discussed later, are employed completely devoid of ideological meaning.

By way of analogy, imagine that the fascist era in Italy had lasted as long as the period between the conversion of Constantine and the end of

the Theodosian Dynasty – around 140 years, from 1912 to 2057 – rather than the twenty-one years that it lasted in reality. If, in the twenty-teens, the symbol of the fasces began to be used as arrows on highway signs, pointing the way for travelers to the closest fuel station or roadside motel, we could not responsibly presume that the maker of the sign was a supporter of the long-dead Mussolini's policies. Instead, the most natural interpretation would be that the sign of the fasces, which was reintroduced a hundred years earlier as a symbol of military might and political ascendancy, had become so naturalized in the social environment that its meaning was no longer inextricably connected with the ideology that it was originally intended to signify. Much the same happened in the Roman empire of the fourth and fifth centuries: symbols of military might and political ascendancy such as the Constantinian staurogram, as well as scribal tools such as *nomina sacra*, came to be used in dramatically new ways. It would be historically irresponsible to interpret such usages as indicating something about the faith of the user, but they may evince something about the culture in which the user lived.

Consider, for instance, Vat. Urb. Lat. 1154, a late fifth-century copy of the grammatical work of (pseudo-)Probus.[32] The Proban tradition was already complex in Late Antiquity, and at least three different hands supply additions in the margins of this manuscript. A number of markers are used in late ancient manuscripts to indicate the place where text should be inserted, and the text that should be inserted. Often, *hs* is inserted in line with the base text, indicating the location of an insertion, and *hd* is written in the margin next to the supplementary material. One corrector of Vat. Urb. Lat. 1154 uses the *hs/hd* method elsewhere in the manuscript,[33] but on 20v, they chose a somewhat different tack; the corrector inserted *hs* in a half-uncial hand contemporary with that of the base text, but instead of the correlating *hd* in the margin, this scribe

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[32] TM 66216. Date of hands following Lowe *CLA* 1.117. Edition Keil, *Grammatici Latini*, vol. 4, 49–192. Keil used Vat. Urb. Lat. 1154 along with Codex Vindobendensis 17 (now Naples Latin 1) for his edition, though he only knew the Vatican manuscript through Lindemann's transcription. For an overview of Proban manuscripts see primarily De Nonno, "I codici grammaticali latini d'età tardoantica: osservazioni e considerazioni," 149–164, as well as Zetzel, *Critics, Compilers, and Commentators: An Introduction to Roman Philology, 200 BCE–800 CE*, 313–314.

[33] See, for instance, 36r. It is unclear what *hd* and *hs* stand for. Lowe suggests *h(ic) d(eest)* and *h(ic) s(upple)*, but other reasonble suggestions have been made. See Lowe, "The Oldest Omission Signs in Latin Manuscripts: Their Origin and Significance."
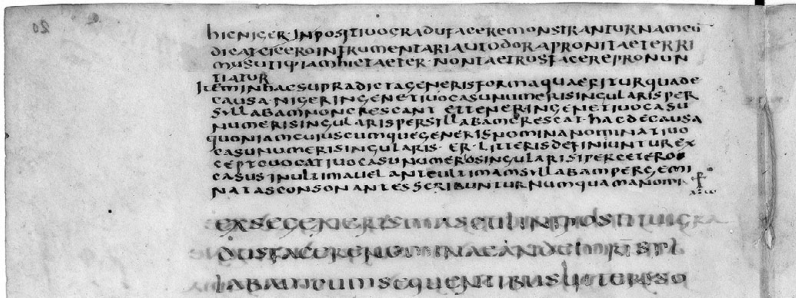
FIGURE 27. Vat. Urb. Lat. 1154, 20v. The staurogram is repeated as well in the bottom margin to indicate that the lower text continues what is above.

chose a staurogram, with an alpha and omega underneath, to alert the reader of this grammar that an insertion should be made (Figure 27).

The use of the same Latin uncial for the text of the correction as well as the alpha of "α:ω" (along with the colon in identical dark brown ink) make clear that this corrector's sign belongs with the marginal note, rather than having been added subsequently. In other words, here we have perhaps the most banal use of the staurogram surviving from antiquity: pointing a reader to a textual variant in a grammatical treatise. I return to this point later.

In the Roman context, christograms, of which the staurogram is one type, were associated initially with Constantine's victory at the Milvian Bridge in 312. In the early years of the fourth century, the christogram was a potent symbol of political domination under the aegis of a new god: the Christ to which Constantine had allegedly sworn his allegiance the night before marching on Rome. This category of scribal symbols that overlaps with *nomina sacra* came to symbolize Christ, Christian faith, and eventually, Constantinian dominance.[34] Early on the symbol was most common on dynastic coinage. For instance RIC VII Constantinople 19 depicts Constantine laureate on the obverse and on the reverse a military standard, topped with a christogram, and the legend SPES PUBLIC ("the safety of the republic"). This coin was struck in 327 in a variety of denominations and seems to refer to Constantine's

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[34] The staurogram appears as an imperial symbol first in Lactantius, *On the Death of the Persecutors* 44. Noel Lenski overviews Constantine's program of visual propaganda, and the relationship between literary and material sources, in *Constantine and the Cities*, 67–83.

victory over Licinius and assumption of sole rule over the East and the West.

The staurogram also functions as a part of a *nomen sacrum*, and appears supralineate in some early New Testament manuscripts including a fourth-century codex containing the Gospels according to Luke and John.[35] It was a potent enough symbol to be a significant part of Constantine's program of visual propaganda, and it continued to appear on coinage throughout the Theodosian Age to symbolize the orthodox Christianity of the regent. Its use across media from manuscripts to coins indicates the ubiquity of the staurogram as a symbol, but it does not indicate how that symbol was used or what it meant: the insertion which it signals in Vat. Urb. Lat. 1154 has no dynastic, military, or theological valance whatsoever. It is a rather bland grammatical note.

Images of the goddess Victoria succumbed to a similar process of resignification in the Theodosian Age. Consider, for instance, RIC IX Cyzicus 26a, a coin of Valentinian II depicting on its obverse the goddess Victoria, with a trophy in her right hand, dragging a captive in her left and standing next to a staurogram. Like the Constantinian coin, from some sixty years before, the legend reads SALUS REIPUBLICAE ("the health of the republic"). Images of Victoria signaled Roman might and subduing of foreign peoples since at least the time of Augustus, when a statue and altar for the god were installed in the Senate *curia*. Despite a few brief removals, the altar remained in the Roman senate chambers well past the reign of Theodosius I, and despite its clear Traditionalist associations, many Orthodox Christians were willing to deploy the image of Victoria devoid of any overt religious meaning.[36]

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[35] Papyrus Hanna 1 Mater Vaterbi, 1B.11v (TM 61743). At *Luke* 14:27 this papyrus records the word ΣΤΑΥΡΟΝ with a tau-rho ligature that looks like a person on a cross, and a supralinear stroke indicating the *nomen sacrum*. Dating according to Nongbri, *God's Library*, 202. The tau-rho ligature is not attested first in Christian materials, as argued by Hurtado, *The Earliest Christian Artifacts: Manuscripts and Christian Origins*, 135–146.

[36] Constantius II requested that the altar be removed from the *curia* in preparation for his visit in 357, though according to Symmachus, Constantius's removal of the altar "did not stand good for long." Symmachus, *Relatio* 3. Most commentators assume that the altar was returned as part of Julian's reforms, though I've long been a proponent of the historiographic principle that, all things being equal, the funniest option is the best. As such I follow Richard Klein in supposing that the altar was quietly replaced after Constantius's visit to Rome concluded. Klein, *Der Streit um den Victoriaaltar*, 113. The altar was removed briefly by the emperor Gratian in 382, and according to Paulinus of Milan, it was replaced in 392 by Euenius. Paulinus, *The Life of Saint Ambrose* 26. An oration of Claudian indicates the continued presence of Victoria's cult statue and altar in

Many regarded the staurogram in a similar way, though the change occurred on a significantly shorter timescale. By the time of the Theodosian empire, the staurogram could be used to signify the Christian deity's protection of the "health of the republic," but it could also be used to indicate the presence of a textual variant in a grammatical treatise. As I read the evidence, a scribe's use of the staurogram as a corrector's symbol in Vat. Urb. Lat. 1154 need not indicate anything about the faith or political inclinations of the corrector. Instead, what the choice indicates is that by the later fifth century, the semantic range of the staurogram, once a sign of imperial power most commonly associated with military equipment, had expanded to encompass any number of applications that have neither imperial nor theological relevance.

The staurogram was also reused as a multipurpose symbol in the Greek East of the early sixth century. I wrote in Chapter 6 about the literary qualities of the so-called *Summaria antiqua* that fills out the margins of Vat. Reg. Lat. 886. The scriptorium that produced this manuscript of the *Theodosian Code*, however, repays further attention. The binder, whose job it was to keep the original quaternions of this substantial manuscript in order and to stitch them together after the scribe had finished their work, used the same symbol – a staurogram – to indicate the beginning of each gathering, as is visible in the upper left corner of 17r (Figure 19), and throughout the manuscript: on 9r, 25r, 33r, 41r, 47r, 55r, 61r, 69r, 77r, 84r, 92r, 100r, 108r, 115r, 123r, etc.

None of these examples appear to be an ancient attempt to cast otherwise dry, pre-Christian scholarship within a Christian frame. Rather, in these manuscripts we see scribes reusing symbols that originated in Christian contexts as ideological blank slates. The fact that a late fifth-century scribe could use a staurogram as a corrector's symbol or a binder's mark suggests nothing credible about the faith of the scribe (or that of a reader), but such uses say a great deal about the culture within which these texts were transcribed and read. The signs are not innocuous or irrelevant pious ephemera. The recasting of even such tedium as marginal notes quite literally under the rubric of Christian symbolism indicates the thoroughgoing extent to which an ideology had been generalized through the remobilization of its operative symbols. Writing in the seventh century about various forms of critical signs that his readers might find in manuscripts, Isidore of Seville agreed that the christogram

the senate chambers at least to the year 404. Claudian, *Panegyric on the Sixth Consulship of Honorius Augustus* 597–602.

had lost all inherent meaning. These examples demonstrate that Isidore was not remarking on a novelty when he offers to his reader, "Chrisomon: this is placed according to the interest of the individual to mark something out."[37]

Analysis of such clear instances of reuse – a sort of scribal spoliation – may help to clarify the scribal and ideological context in other, less clear cases. Vienna Österreichische Nationalbibliothek Latin 15, for instance, is an early fifth-century deluxe codex of Livy's *History of Rome* that uses a supralineate $\overline{PR}$ to stand for various inflected forms of *populus romanus*.[38] This contraction is not known from the epigraphic corpus,[39] and the other known copy of this text from the Theodosian Age uses the same abbreviation but without supralinear strokes.[40] Even within the same section of text, the scribe indicates the abbreviation sometimes with a supralinear stroke, in the manner of a *nomen sacrum*, and sometimes without (Figure 28).

The scribe copying this manuscript apparently uses the tools of Christian manuscript production to indicate to a reader the presence of an abbreviation. The inconsistent use within this manuscript, as well as the comparison with a contemporary manuscript of the same text that does not utilize supralineate abbreviations, suggests possibly that the scribe in question is not taking over usage from an exemplar, but rather reused tools known from a different scribal domain in their work on this manuscript of Livy. It is of course possible that this scribe implements an epigraphic practice when employing supralineate $\overline{PR}$, but it is not probable: the abbreviation is otherwise unattested. The most proximate context in which to understand this manuscript's form of abbreviation is a that of a Christian, biblical scriptorium. Another late fourth- or early fifth-century manuscript of North African origin uses the same form – $\overline{PR}$

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[37] Isidore of Seville, *Etymologies* 1.21.22. Text Lindsay.

[38] TM 67658. Dating Lowe *CLA* 10.1472. See also 147v, with supralineate *PR* for *populi romani* in 45.1, 159r which uses *PR* supralineate for *populo romano* in 45.14, and 162v which uses *PR* supralineate for *populo romano* in 45.18.

[39] See Gordon, *Supralineate Abbreviations*, s.v. "P."

[40] Bamberg Staatliche Bibliothek Class. 35a (TM 67175). The manuscript uses *PL* for *populus romanus* as well as *TR PL* for *tribunus plebis*. Paleographic analysis in notes in Seider, *Pälographie der lateinischen Papyri*, vol. 2.1, pp. 138–142. Further fragments of this manuscript were found reused to mend a medieval biblical manuscript, published in 2000 by Matthias Tischler, and the pattern holds. Tischler, "Neue Fragmente der spätantiken Bamberger Livius-Handschrift (*CLA* VIII. 1028 Addenda)."
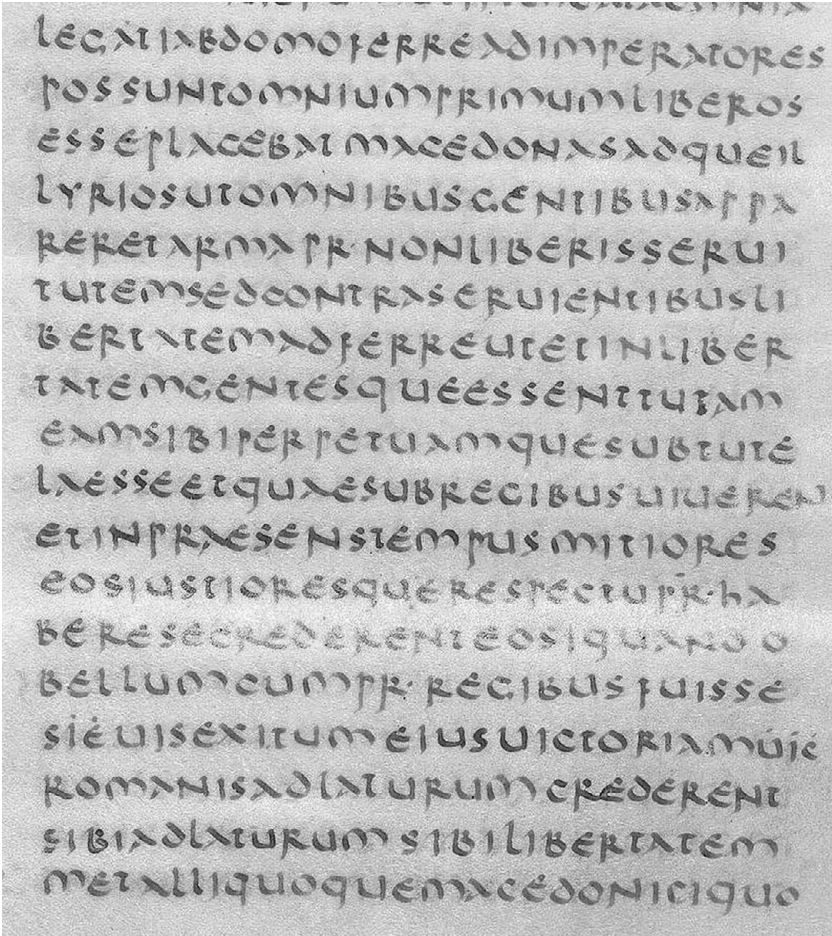
FIGURE 28. Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek Latin cod. 15, 162r. (TM 67658). From Livy, *History of Rome* 45.28. The *PR* abbreviation is used three times in this section, with only one instance supralineate, on the seventh line from the bottom.

supralineate – to indicate *presbutero* in a copy of Cyprian's *Letter* 54 (Figure 29).[41]

In line 18 of the right column of this leaf of Cyprian's letter, the scribe used XPΣ supralineate to indicate *Christus*, indicating their familiarity with *nomina sacra*. Thus, the same scribe's use of supralineate *PR* in line

[41] Dating Lowe *CLA* 1 (p. 18). See also the initial publication by Turner, "A Newly Discovered Leaf of a Fifth-Century Ms of St. Cyprian."
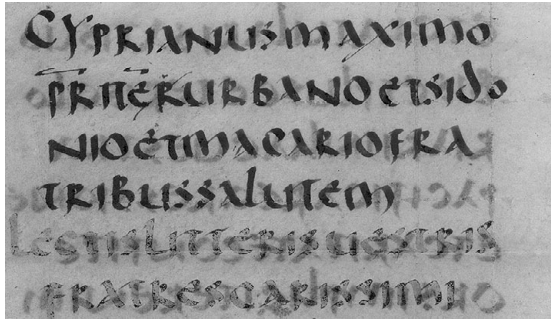
FIGURE 29. Vat. Lat. 10959, 1r. (TM 66155). Incipit of Cyprian *Letter* 54 with *PR* supralineate to indicate *presbutero* as well as *ITE* superlineate to indicate *ite(m)*. The supralinear stroke, in other words, is used for different purposes in successive words. The first indicates the contraction, while the second indicates a suppressed *M*, as is common in fourth- and fifth-century majuscule manuscripts (though more common at the end of lines). The same calligraphic supralinear stroke is used in line 12 of the same column to indicate a suppressed *M* at the end of *laetatu(m)*.

two of the left column should be understood as a reuse of that same scribal tool, even though *presbuteros* is not a traditional *nomen sacrum*. It is reasonable to assume that the scribe copying Cyprian used a supralinear stroke as a scribal tool to indicate, simply, "this is a contraction." My argument is that the same assumption is reasonable in the terms of the roughly contemporary scribe copying Livy. In both manuscripts new contractions are indicated with the same tool, and yet scholars are only comfortable calling one a nonstandard *nomen sacrum*, while the other is simply a scribal oddity. A responsible historical methodology requires us to consider that these coincidences may not be accidental, and that they may say something about the ideological context in which each text was transcribed even though they do not speak to the ideology of the scribes themselves.

Such correspondences in scribal practice, and in the use of seemingly "Christian" tools in nontheological contexts, are so common in fifth-century manuscripts that the trend cannot be reduced to training or local peculiarities. A juristic fragment in Berlin dated between the mid-fourth and mid-fifth century uses $\overline{PR}$ supralineate to indicate *praetor*.[42] It is

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[42] P. Berlin 6757 (TM 62941). Dating Lowe *CLA* 8.1033, Seider, *Paläographie der lateinischen Papyri*, 2.2.61–65, Ammirati, "Per una storia del libro antico," 65. For the text and philological commentary see Krüger, "Die Berliner Fragmente vorjustinianischer Rechtsquellen," with an updated text and legal analysis in Gian Luigi Falchi, "Sui 'Fragmenta berolinensia' incerti auctoris '*de iudiciis*'."
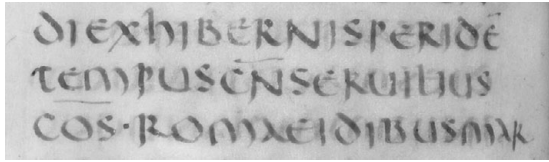
FIGURE 30. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale Lat. 5730, 22v, "Codex Puteanus."
(Source gallica.bnf.fr / BnF.) Note the supralinear abbreviations for "Gaius" (line 2) and
"consul" (line 3), as well as a supralinear stroke at the end of line 1 noting the suppressed
final M of "idem." The text is Livy *From the Founding of the City* 22.

unclear whether this supralineate $\overline{PR}$ is intended as a contracted or
an abbreviated form – that is, whether the $\overline{PR}$ stands for *pr(etor)* or *p(reto)
r*. If the former, then there is some classical precedent for such abbreviation.
If the latter, then this contraction is more easily placed squarely in a Christian
scribal context. The ambiguity itself is telling, and a Theodosian reader of
this text might reasonably come to either conclusion.

   Similarly, Codex Puteanus uses a supralinear stroke over *CN* for *Gaius*
(22v, Figure 30), *COS* for *consul* (22v and very often elsewhere,
Figure 30), *M* for *Marcus* (29r), *PR* for *praetorum* (31v), and *SC* for
senatus consultis (31v).[43] The four distinct uses of supralineate *PR* men-
tioned here alone suggest that what we are dealing with is not a standard-
ized set of abbreviations but rather that the supralinear stroke is deployed
as a common tool: an aid to readers whom the scribe expected to be
familiar with such indications.[44]

   Examples could be multiplied almost $\overline{AI}$. Among the closest paleo-
graphic parallels to Codex Puteanus is the Lavanttal Ambrose, dis-
cussed earlier. Clear links are visible among the two manuscripts
in paratextual features (running titles, binder's marks) and ligatures
(Figures 31–34). Given the overwhelming similarities in script, paratext,
and codicology, it is near certain that these manuscripts come from
the same period, and perhaps from the same scriptorium.[45] Both are

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[43] Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale Lat. 5730 (TM 66692).

[44] Standardized abbreviation lists remain, though the most extensive is too late to be of
   much use in this context: the *Notae Vaticanae* (Vatican Reg. Lat. 1128), where eight folia
   list in alphabetical order the entire corpus of *notae iuris* known in the ninth century.
   Edited by Mommsen in Keil (ed.), *Grammatici Latini*, 4.288–300.

[45] Both manuscripts are quaternions (typical of the fifth century) with a supralineate (and
   sometimes underlined) Roman numeral on the bottom right corner of the verso of the last
   sheet in each gathering. The only significant difference is in the page density, with Vatican
   averaging c. 26 lines per page and Lavanttal c. 21. The lines are slightly longer in the BnF
   manuscript, too: c. 18 letters per line, vs. c. 15 in the Lavanttal manuscript.
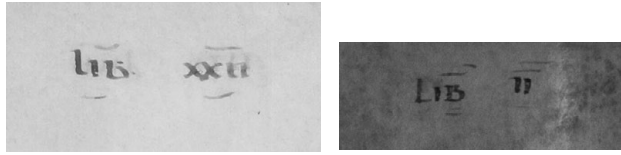
FIGURE 31. Running titles. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale Lat. 5730, 28r (left). (Source gallica.bnf.fr / BnF.) Stiftsbibliothek Lavanttal 1, 54v (right).
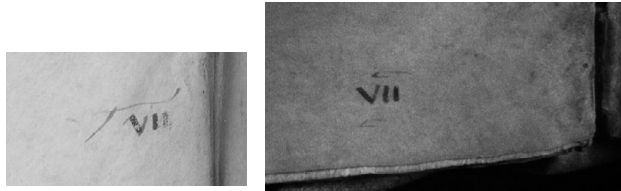

FIGURE 32. Binder's marks. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale Lat. 5730, 25v (left). (Source gallica.bnf.fr / BnF.) Stiftsbibliothek Lavanttal 1, 54v (right).
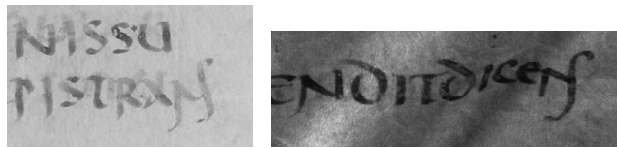

FIGURE 33. NS ligature. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale Lat. 5730, 2v (left). (Source gallica.bnf.fr / BnF.) Stiftsbibliothek Lavanttal 1, 8v (right).

FIGURE 34. NT ligature. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale Lat. 5730, 9r (left). (Source gallica.bnf.fr / BnF.) Stiftsbibliothek Lavanttal 1, 7r (right).

dated to the mid-fifth century and, I argue, we must bring an analogous set of assumptions to understanding the particular scribal features found in both. In both we find the same tools – Christian scribal tools – used throughout.

The phenomenon is not merely literary either, nor is it solely found in manuscripts. As I mentioned earlier, supralineate abbreviations arrive remarkably late as a standard tool in the epigraphic record, and as Nicoletta Giovè Marchioli has demonstrated, there is a surprisingly close connection in scribal habits between epigraphic and literary materials, particularly when it comes to abbreviations.[46] In the classical period a supralinear stroke was typically used only to indicate numbers, and occasionally (though inconsistently) consular dates.[47] By the mid-fifth century, however, supralinear strokes were used to identify even the most common contractions in public inscriptions. For instance, a dedicatory inscription from 468/469 for Flavius Eugenius Asellus records only three lines but boasts four supralinear strokes, indicating *v(ir) c(larissimus)*, *praef(ectus) urb(i)*, and *v(ice) s(acra) i(udicans)*.[48] By the early sixth century, these indications were used even in funerary contexts. For instance a funerary inscription from June 23, 525 CE for a certain Maxima, "enslaved attendant of Christ (*ancilla Cristi*)," uses supralinear strokes in every possible place: eight times in an unimposing inscription of seven lines.[49] One supralinear stroke, carved over the word "in" on line 7, appears to be completely extraneous – so much so that Ernst Diehl excluded it from his edition of the text. Perhaps the scribe got carried away with all the abbreviating.

This Christian tool found its way from biblical manuscripts to other literary texts, and eventually to dedicatory and even funerary inscriptions. There is a classical precedent for the use of supralinear abbreviations: they occur in the epigraphic record from the period of the early empire, though rarely. The dramatic increase of attestations of this tool, and its use to identify both contractions and abbreviations in manuscripts and inscriptions occurred only after the period of Christian ascendancy. Supralineate contractions and abbreviations are not uniquely Christian, but their thoroughgoing use is, and they came to be used widely only when

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[46] Marchioli, *Alle origini delle abbreviature latine: una prima ricognizione (I secolo a.C.–IV secolo d.C.)*, 15–16.

[47] See, for instance, Musei Vaticani 216.0.0, from 221, which abbreviates *consulibus* as COS supralineate in line 6, but not in line 16.

[48] *CIL* VI 1668 (Terme di Diocleziano VII.10). Asellus *PLRE* 2 s.v. Asellus 2. For the inscription see Claudio Noviello, "VII, 10. Un restauro del Prefetto Urbano."

[49] *ILCV* 1469. For the inscription see Noviello, "IX, 34. Iscrizione di *Maxima*." Supralinear abbreviations occur in lines 3 (*ann(os)*, *pl(us) m(inus)*, *d(e)p(osita)*, *kal(endas)*), 4 (v*(iro) c (larissimo)*, *cons(ule)*), 6 (*ann(os)*, *m(enses)*), and 7 (*in* with a supralinear stroke for an unknown purpose, probably a mistake).

Christians became politically and scholastically dominant. I argue that this state of affairs is no coincidence.

I want to discuss one more pair of Theodosian manuscripts which appear to have the same provenance but which scholars typically class differently because of the content of their leaves. The so-called *Vatican Vergil* is a deluxe manuscript from the late fourth or early fifth century that contains portions of the *Georgics* and *Aeneid*.[50] The seventy-six surviving leaves have been the subject of hundreds of paleographic, text critical, and art historical studies.[51] Though it uses no *nomina sacra* of any sort, nor contains any obvious paratextual features of note, we can be relatively certain that the Theodosian, Italian center responsible for the production of this manuscript produced at least one other manuscript which remains extant: a deluxe Latin Bible known as the *Quedlinburg Itala*.[52]

The *Vatican Vergil* is not complete: it originally contained the entirety of Vergil's work in what must have been around 440 folia like its cousin the *Roman Vergil* discussed earlier, and it is written in "an old type of rustic capital."[53] The text is of remarkable quality but is unremarkable otherwise; the single scribe responsible for the entirety of the text was well trained (and perhaps suppressed some forms that they knew[54]), but based on the text alone little can be said about the intellectual or ideological environment in which the scribe worked. More remarkable are the fifty surviving illustrations, which comprise two-thirds of many pages, and in places take up entire leaves of the codex. David H. Wright's reconstruction suggests that originally there must have been approximately 280 illustrations, and it is the art that has been used most often to situate the work. Commentators have focused on these illustrations to make

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[50] Vatican Lat. 3225 (TM 65873).

[51] See chiefly Pellegrin, *Les manuscrits classiques latins de la Bibliothèque vaticane: catalogue*, 2.1.113–117; Seider, "Beiträge zur Geschichte und Paläographie der antiken Vergilhandschriften," 138–139; Steffens, *Paléographie latine*, pl. 10; de Wit, *Die Miniaturen des Vergilius Vaticanus*; and Wright, *The Vatican Vergil: A Masterpiece of Late Antique Art*. A comprehensive list is not available, but a bibliography for most of the major studies is listed at https://digi.vatlib.it/mss/detail/Vat.lat.3225.

[52] Berlin Staatsbibliothek Ms. Theol. Lat. 485 + Quedlinburg Stiftskirche (unnumbered), TM 67208.

[53] Lowe *CLA* 1.11.

[54] Such as an *H* formed with an upward loop on 32r which Wright notes "suggests that our scribe was familiar with this peculiar form, which does occur later in the fifth century, as in the Vatican-Orléans-Berlin fragments of Sallust (Lowe, *CLA* 6.809)." Wright, *The Vatican Vergil*, 76n3.

arguments about the codex's intellectual context, and in turn about the ideology of its owner. Wright's approach is characteristic, and echoes the majority of critical opinions. He claims that in Late Antiquity, "Christians continued to read and admire Vergil, both for the exemplary qualities of the poetry and as the embodiment of a national tradition, but no Christian is likely to have commissioned a fine illustrated edition, especially one containing many scenes of pagan sacrifice."[55] Unsurprisingly, given his dating of this text to "the time around 400, meaning probably within two decades on either side of that date,"[56] Wright presumes that this text should be understood as arising under the patronage of "an associate of Quintus Aurelius Symmachus," the renowned Roman Traditionalist of the Theodosian Age, and proposes that the most reasonable understanding of the context in which this codex was produced is the flourishing intellectual life at Rome around 400, specifically in the absence of significant Christian voices at Rome when compared with the rest of the empire.[57] "The power of the church was growing rapidly," he writes, "but the most important Christian intellectuals were not in Rome: Ambrose was in Milan, Jerome in Bethlehem, and Augustine in Hippo. The pagans were on the defensive politically, but because of the diffusion of authority, in an important sense Rome was still theirs."[58]

Wright's contention, that the text cannot have been commissioned or owned by a Christian, is unconvincing a priori because it confuses the stressed and stressful orthodoxy of "the most important Christian intellectuals" like Ambrose, Jerome, and Augustine with the interests of Christians writ large. Jerome was at least as hated as he was loved in the late fourth century, and Augustine was almost entirely unknown outside of a dramatically circumscribed group of clerics and governmental officers.[59] In Wright's work, as well as studies by other specialists on

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[55] Ibid., 101–102.

[56] Ibid., 91. The dating is made on the basis of stylistic comparisons primarily with the mosaics of Santa Maria Maggiore and a set of carved ivories from the Theodosian Age, and although the methodology is suspect, the dating comports with the paleographic dating of Lowe, Sieder, and others, and I take c. 400 as about as established of a date as is possible for a manuscript of this type, i.e. a deluxe literary production lacking dated colophons.

[57] Ibid., 102. One wonders whether there hasn't been some bit of attraction between the paleographic analysis and the proposed historical association with Symmachus. Agati, too, claims that the manuscript "is very probably a Roman product of the pagan circle of Symmachus, Servius, and Macrobius." Agati, *The Manuscript Book: Compendium of Codicology*, 314. As discussed earlier, Macrobius does not belong to this generation, but to the generation following.

[58] Wright, *The Vatican Vergil*, 101.   [59] Shaw, "Augustine and Men of Imperial Power."

the topic, the backward gaze of orthodoxy has produced a blurred picture of Theodosian Age Christianity. Ambrose, the only cleric mentioned by Wright who wielded significant political power, regularly peppered his writings with Vergilian quotes and reminiscences, and such a proposal forgets Christians at least as powerful as Ambrose whose confessional commitment comes across hardly at all in their surviving literary work.[60] One thinks of Macrobius, who was likely Praetorian Prefect in Rome in 430, or Vegetius, who was a *vir inlustris comes* – both of whom have been discussed in this book already.[61] Vergil was so untainted by paganism for the Theodosian Age Christians of Cuicul that they constructed a magnificent baptistry to serve the metropolitan basilica, complete with a quote from *Eclogue* 3 at its center, over which initiates received the Christian rite of baptism. The baptismal fount reads *[Gentes t]empus erit omnes in fonte [lavari]* – "There will come a time for all people to be washed in the fount."[62] North African Christians baptized Vergil, quite literally.

There is no credible reason to think that this copy of Vergil could not be owned or commissioned by a Theodosian Age Christian, and as Inabelle Levin has demonstrated, there is strong reason to think that the object itself was produced in the same scriptorium as produced the *Quedlinburg Itala*, the oldest illustrated biblical manuscript extant.[63] The illustrations of this bible share significant stylistic and thematic overlap with both the *Vatican Vergil* as well as with the mosaic cycle found in the nave at the basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore, dated to the papacy of Sixtus III between 432 and 440.[64] All three of these objects – the bible, the Vergil, and the mosaic cycle – are likely products of the flurry of activity in Rome after the sack of 410. Striking similarities in so many details among the illustrations suggest the manuscripts were also made in Rome, and that they were all products of the same

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[60] Diederich, *Vergil in the Works of St. Ambrose*.

[61] *PLRE* 2, s.v. "P. Fl. Vegetius Renatus" (p .763)

[62] ILAlgérie 2.3 8281 (TM 335172). The line in the *Eclogues* reads . . . *tempus erit omnes in fonte lavabo*. Vergil, *Eclogues* 3.97. Text *LCL* 63. Matthew D. C. Larsen has a deft discussion of the baptistry in "The Real-and-Imagined Biography of a Gospel Manuscript," 15–18, and Nathan Dennis discusses the inscription briefly in "A Tale of Two Inscriptions," 29.

[63] Levin, *The Quedlinburg Itala: The Oldest Illustrated Biblical Manuscript*, 67–71.

[64] de Wit, *Die Miniaturen des Vergilius Vaticanus*, 155–156. On the date of the mosaic cycle, see Brenk, *Die frühchristlichen Mosaiken in S. Maria Maggiore zu Rom*, 1–2.

generation.[65] Whether the *Vatican Vergil* and the *Quedlinburg Itala* were products of the same scriptorium is impossible to say. It is clear, however, that both arise from the same milieu, and we cannot dismiss the very real possibility that Christians are responsible for all three.

The historical interpretation of this cluster of materials is difficult, but it is not intractable. If the *Quedlinburg Itala* and the *Vatican Vergil* came from the same scriptorium, they might have been delivered to the same household; or, perhaps not. It is perfectly reasonable to think that the Vergil codex found its first home on the bookshelf of an elite Roman Christian, but it is just as reasonable to think that the bible came to rest in the *scrinium* of a Roman Traditionalist interested in having a copy of texts so central to many in their social network. We simply don't know. Clearer is that the distinction between "Pagan" and "Christian" manuscript production does not hold in the Theodosian Age. If the same iconographic language is visible in the mosaics of Santa Maria Maggiore, the *Vatican Vergil*, and the *Quedlinburg Itala*, then the visual language is either meaningless when trying to assign ideological commitments to the producers, or the ideological commitments of the producers have no clear bearing on the visual language used. In either case a picture emerges of elite society in which ideology and materiality are separable, even when not always separate; a society in which the tools of scholastic production are influenced by the ideological context, but in which the tools selected by any particular user do not identify their theological or ideological commitments. This is a society with thoroughgoing Christian influences, but a society in which one's choice to use "Christian" tools speaks to the context of production rather than to the commitment of the producer.

CONCLUSION

This chapter, and Chapter 6, investigated the new texts produced by Theodosian Age writers and scribes against the background of the dominant scholastic argumentative framework. I have tried to explain why books from the Theodosian Age look so dramatically different from those which preceded them, and why books across genres began in this period to look so remarkably similar: with shared formats, features, and scribal interventions. Why is it that, for instance, the closest paleographical and

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[65] On the *Quedlinburg Itala*, Inabelle Levin argues persuasively for a Theodosian date. Levin, *The Quedlinburg Itala*, 70.

codicological parallel for a late fourth-century juristic fragment such as *P. Haun* III 45 is not another juristic fragment, but rather one of the earliest known Latin fragments of a Christian text: a liturgical codex fragment in the Rylands collection?[66] It is because, so far as we can tell, the producers and users of these sort of texts were one and the same.[67]

   The fifth century, from which the vast majority of our relevant manuscripts survive, was a time of extraordinary innovation. Approximately 40 percent of all surviving Latin literature produced before the seventh century was composed between 400 and 499 CE.[68] Literary production flourished, and old tools were reused in new ways in order to accommodate a set of novel scholarly practices. The penetration of peculiarly Christian tools and symbols into nontheological domains does not speak to the Christianity of writers producing our extant manuscripts as much as it speaks to the dominant ideological framework in which these individuals worked. The weight of the evidence, I suggest, demonstrates that a shift in scholarly practices caused a shift in material production that is visible in manuscripts and inscriptions from the period under discussion. From an expectation of aggregation came problems of discernment and new strategies for making clear what material is included for edification, and what is included because scholars expected that a good argument was one based in aggregation. Christian tools such as supralineate contractions came to be widely used throughout the literary and documentary landscape even as symbols such as the christogram were rendered ideological blank slates, capable of signifying everything from imperial triumph to textual variation. Professionals trained in Christian scribal practices and iconography took their talents to work on nontheological texts, such that the contemporary scholarly separation of "secular" from "sacred" Theodosian Age material becomes a distinction without a difference.

   A book that looks different elicits a different interpretation, and new reading strategies commensurate with the change in form. New book-forms and textual features influenced the meanings read into and out from books during the Theodosian Age. Chapter 8 returns to literary evidence, to explore the new meanings that readers found within the pages of these Theodosian productions.

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[66] *P. Ryl. Gr.* 472 (TM 64321).
[67] Ammirati, "Per una storia del libro latino antico," 72.
[68] Data based on wordcounts for dated texts in *Corpus Corporum* (43.6 percent) and the Brepols Latin databases (38.0 percent).