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978-1-108-47407-8 — Eusebius and Empire: Constructing Church and Rome in the
Ecclesiastical History
James Corke-Webster
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EUSEBIUS AND EMPIRE

Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*, written in the early fourth century, continues to serve as our primary gateway to a crucial three-hundred-year period: the rise of early Christianity under the Roman Empire. In this volume, James Corke-Webster undertakes the first systematic study considering the *History* in the light of its fourth-century circumstances as well as its author's personal history, intellectual commitments, and literary abilities. He argues that the *Ecclesiastical History* is not simply an attempt to record the past history of Christianity but a sophisticated mission statement that uses events and individuals from that past to mould a new vision of Christianity tailored to Eusebius' fourth-century context. Eusebius presents elite Graeco-Roman Christians with a picture of their faith that smooths off its rough edges and misrepresents its size, extent, nature, and relationship to Rome. Ultimately, Eusebius suggests that Christianity was – and always had been – the Empire's natural heir.

JAMES CORKE-WEBSTER is Lecturer in Roman History at King's College London. His work focuses on early Christian and late antique history and literature. As well as a series of articles on Eusebius, he has published on early Christian experience under Rome – in particular the Pliny–Trajan correspondence on the Christians – martyr literature, apologetic writings, and early hagiography.

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for MJ & DT

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Preface and Acknowledgements

I first read Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History* in the summer of 2010 in Vienna, sitting on the banks of the Danube, looking out over the Roman Empire's northern border. It was the text I had been looking for, filled with colourful and surprising stories from early Christian history that I had never encountered before. Here was the historical Jesus responding to royal fan mail; an emperor solemnly suggesting to the Senate that the god Christ be admitted to the Roman pantheon; a church father forced to remain in his house because his mother had hidden his clothes. But at the same time, the fact that I had not encountered them intrigued me. These stories sit side by side with some of the most firmly held traditions of early Christianity, in a source that much scholarship seemed, upon inspection, to persist in using uncritically, despite occasional explicit warnings that it should be treated with care. The taller tales of the *History* were for the most part simply sidelined or ignored. They were for me, on the contrary, a gateway to the author who has kept me by turns entertained and exasperated for the past eight years.

Trying to understand the *History* has taken me from the Danube, at the north of Rome's Empire, to its place of production, Eusebius' home town of Caesarea Maritima, in the biblical lands at the Empire's east, where I wrote the Conclusion to this book. My intellectual journey in that time has in some ways been the reverse – from undergraduate study in Theology to a Lectureship in Roman History. This book reflects those evolving interests and was born of a changing understanding of early Christianity and its place in its Graeco-Roman context as well as in modern academic study. It has also accrued many debts. Though I hope I have channelled some of Eusebius' capacity to inform and entertain, I am certain I have inherited his penchant for exasperation. What follows does little justice to those to whom this book owes arguably as much as it does to me.

This book began, ultimately, by referral. The theological teaching of Tom Greggs at the Manchester Grammar School pushed me towards that

of Mark Edwards at Christ Church, Oxford, who in turn – noting my penchant in weekly essays for avoiding the theological in favour of the historical – directed me towards further study in Classics. An MPhil under the kind and expansive guidance of Rebecca Flemming and Christopher Kelly at Cambridge led to a doctorate at Manchester as part of Kate Cooper’s exciting and trail-blazing RCUK-funded ‘Constantine’s Dream Project’. Few doctoral students in the Humanities have the good fortune, I think, to be part of something so much greater than themselves at such an early stage of their career, and I am grateful to Kate and the rest of the Manchester team for making me feel more a colleague than a student, and for their constant guidance for one whose knowledge of antiquity was at times more half empty than half full. To Kate in particular I owe my intellectual awakening and the inspiration of a mentor and friend. Without her, I doubt I would have become an academic.

The doctorate on which this book is based was funded for three years by an ESRC scholarship and by a Fulbright Scholarship for a fourth. I am grateful to both the ESRC and the Fulbright Commission for investing in me, and to the latter in particular for taking a step into the unknown by betting on ancient history. The University of Manchester and the University of California, Berkeley, provided the rich and friendly intellectual atmosphere in which my Eusebian interest grew; I am grateful to the staff of both institutions, and in particular to Susanna Elm, Todd Hickey, Roberta Mazza, and Alison Sharrock for their guidance. The doctoral communities at both institutions – in particular David DeVore, Jessica Dixon, Lisa Eberle, Kat Fennelly, James Greenhalgh, Brendan Haug, Michael Kowen, Zak Manfredi, Mark McCulloch, Ed Owens, Gregory Price, and Stevie Spiegel – supported me even when I was not particularly receptive to it, and I remain thankful for time spent intellectually, and otherwise.

Since 2013 I have worked (and continued to learn) at the University of Edinburgh, Durham University, and now King’s College London. The varied teaching I have done at all three was a major catalyst of the greatly changed shape of the book that grew out of the doctorate, and I am grateful to all the students I have taught over the past five years – from first-year undergraduates to doctoral candidates – for the ways they have shaped my thinking, often without knowing they were doing so. Among other things, the rewriting of this book has proved beyond any doubt, to my own mind at least, the fundamental importance of the interwoven nature of research and teaching to academic life. The Department of Classics at Durham also funded a stay in Caesarea to – as I cheekily requested –

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‘commune with the spirit of Eusebius’. In Caesarea I am grateful to Ruth Tsadok, Curator at the Caesarea Museum, and Joseph Patrich for their time and generosity. Audiences at conferences and research seminars too numerous to list have listened patiently and commented kindly on this research at all stages of its production. Also numerous, but necessitating listing for their generosity with time and wisdom, are those who have read it in written form. John Barclay, Jane Heath, Michael Hollerich, Aaron Johnson, Scott Johnson, Ted Kaizer, Adam Kemezis, Ulrike Roth, Jared Secord, and Rebecca Usherwood all read sections; George Boys-Stones, Kate Cooper, David DeVore, Andy Fear, and Simon Swain all read it in its entirety at one stage or another. All provided honest and astute commentary that altered, corrected, and honed the final form of *Eusebius and Empire*. Not all their advice was heeded, and the flaws of the final product are of course my own. At the end of the long gestation of this work, I am grateful to the two anonymous readers at Cambridge University Press for their helpful comments (and offer apologies for the more irritating aspects of my style, particularly those that have remained), and to Michael Sharp and his assistants Marianne Nield and Laura Blake for their support and effort in producing the book itself.

Finally, I am grateful for those close to me who have (intentionally or not) helped this book appear. Alastair Akers, Daniel Arenson, Nicholas Chapman, Garth Smith, Michael Stark, and Rupert Wingate-Saul have regularly inquired as to the progress of my seminal work on the Portuguese footballer Eusébio; I am grateful for their support for a book so removed from their own interests. I remind them that there’s no expectation to actually read it. My parents, to whom this book is dedicated, have always supported me, in study and in life. I owe them both more than I acknowledge, or can ever properly thank them for, and I hope these first literary fruits are some proof that their efforts have not been unappreciated. The last word goes to Lizzie Chapple. As my friend she was fortuitously present at numerous key moments as I wrote my doctoral thesis; as my girlfriend she has been ever-present as that thesis was turned into a book, offering encouragement at times when my own enthusiasm and belief waned. She is currently my fiancée, but by the time this is printed, she will (I hope!) be my wife. As long as she is, I will write happy.

Abbreviations

Abbreviations of ancient works are adapted from the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (4th edition).

<i>Apocol.</i>	Seneca(?), <i>Apocolocyntosis</i> (<i>Pumpkinification</i>)
<i>1 Apol.</i>	Justin Martyr, <i>Apologia prima</i> (<i>First Apology</i>)
<i>1 Clem.</i>	Clement of Rome, <i>Epistula 1 ad Corinthios</i> (<i>First Letter to the Corinthians</i>)
<i>Act. Paul.</i>	Anon. <i>Acta Pauli et Theclae</i> (<i>Acts of Paul and Thecla</i>)
<i>Adv. Haer.</i>	Irenaeus, <i>Adversus haereses</i> (<i>Against Heresies</i>)
<i>AJ</i>	Josephus, <i>Antiquitates Judaicae</i> (<i>Antiquities of the Jews</i>)
<i>Ann.</i>	Tacitus, <i>Annales</i> (<i>Annals</i>)
<i>Ant. Rom.</i>	Dionysius of Halicarnassus, <i>Antiquitates Romanae</i> (<i>Roman Antiquities</i>)
<i>Ap. c. Arian.</i>	Athanasius, <i>Apologia contra Arianos</i> (<i>Defence Against the Arians</i>)
<i>Apocr.</i>	Anon. <i>Apocryphon Iacobi</i> (<i>Apocryphon of James</i>)
<i>Apol.</i>	Eusebius and Pamphilus, <i>Apologia pro Origene</i> (<i>Defence of Origen</i>)
<i>Apoll., Epist.</i>	Apollonius of Tyana, <i>Epistulae</i> (<i>Epistles</i>)
<i>Leg.</i>	Athenagoras, <i>Legatio pro Christianis</i> (<i>Plea for the Christians</i>)
<i>Bibl.</i>	Photius, <i>Bibliotheca</i> (<i>Library</i>)
<i>BJ</i>	Josephus, <i>Bellum Judaicum</i> (<i>Jewish War</i>)
<i>Carm.</i>	Horace, <i>Carmina</i> (<i>Odes</i>)
<i>Cat.</i>	Plutarch, <i>Cato Maior</i> (<i>Cato the Elder</i>)
<i>CG</i>	Jerome, <i>Commentarius in Epistolam ad Galatias</i>
<i>CI</i>	Eusebius, <i>Commentarius in Isaiam</i> (<i>Commentary on Isaiah</i>)

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<i>CM</i>	Origen, <i>Commentarius in Matthaemum</i> (<i>Commentary on Matthew</i>)
<i>CT</i>	Jerome, <i>Commentarius in Epistolam ad Titum</i> (<i>Commentary on the Epistle to Titus</i>)
<i>Cod. Iust.</i>	<i>Codex Iustinianus</i> (<i>Code of Justinian</i>)
<i>Contr. Cels.</i>	Origen, <i>Contra Celsum</i> (<i>Against Celsus</i>)
<i>Contr. Hier.</i>	Eusebius, <i>Contra Hieroclem</i> (<i>Against Hierocles</i>)
<i>Contr. Marc.</i>	Eusebius, <i>Contra Marcellum</i> (<i>Against Marcellus</i>)
<i>Contr. Ruf.</i>	Jerome, <i>Contra Rufinum</i> (<i>Against Rufinus</i>)
<i>De Dom.</i>	Cicero, <i>De domo sua</i> (<i>On His House</i>)
<i>De Mort. Pers.</i>	Lactantius, <i>De mortibus persecutorum</i> (<i>On the Deaths of the Persecutors</i>)
<i>De Vir.</i>	Jerome, <i>De viris illustribus</i> (<i>On Illustrious Men</i>)
<i>DE</i>	Eusebius, <i>Demonstratio evangelica</i> (<i>Proof of the Gospel</i>)
<i>Dial.</i>	Justin Martyr, <i>Dialogus cum Tryphone</i> (<i>Dialogue with Trypho</i>)
<i>Dig.</i>	<i>Digesta</i> (<i>Digest</i>)
<i>Div. Inst.</i>	Lactantius, <i>Divinae institutiones</i> (<i>Divine Institutes</i>)
<i>Dom.</i>	Suetonius, <i>Vita Domitiani</i> (<i>Life of Domitian</i>)
<i>Eunap.</i>	Eunapius, <i>Vitae sophistarum</i> (<i>Lives of the Sophists</i>)
<i>Exhort.</i>	Origen, <i>Exhortatio ad martyrium</i> (<i>Exhortation to Martyrdom</i>)
<i>Haer.</i>	Hippolytus, <i>Refutatio omnium haeresium</i> (<i>Refutation of All Heresies</i>)
<i>HE</i>	Eusebius, <i>Historia ecclesiastica</i> (<i>Ecclesiastical History</i>)
<i>Hist. Rom.</i>	Cassius Dio, <i>Historia romana</i> (<i>Roman History</i>)
<i>Hom. Luc.</i>	Origen, <i>Homiliae in Lucam</i> (<i>Homilies on Luke</i>)
<i>Hor. Epist.</i>	Horace, <i>Epistulae</i> (<i>Epistles</i>)
<i>Hymn.</i>	Callimachus, <i>Hymnus in Apollinem</i> (<i>Hymn to Apollo</i>)
<i>Idol.</i>	Tertullian, <i>De idolatria</i> (<i>On Idolatry</i>)
<i>Iei.</i>	Tertullian, <i>De ieiunio adversus psychicos</i> (<i>On Fasting Against the Psychics</i>)
<i>In Orig.</i>	Gregory Thaumaturgus, <i>In Originem oratio panegyrica</i> (<i>Oration and Panegyric Addressed to Origen</i>)
<i>Jer., Epist.</i>	Jerome, <i>Epistulae</i> (<i>Epistles</i>)
<i>Mart. Pol.</i>	Ps. Pionius, <i>Martyrium Polycarpi</i> (<i>Martyrdom of Polycarp</i>)
<i>Med.</i>	Marcus Aurelius, <i>Meditationes</i> (<i>Meditations</i>)
<i>Mor. Per.</i>	Lucian, <i>De morte Peregrini</i> (<i>On the Passing of Peregrinus</i>)

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<i>MP</i>	Eusebius, <i>De martyribus Palaestinae</i> (<i>Martyrs of Palestine</i>) LR = Long Recension; SR = Short Recension
<i>Ner.</i>	Suetonius, <i>Vita Neronis</i> (<i>Life of Nero</i>)
<i>Oct.</i>	Minucius Felix, <i>Octavius</i> (<i>Octavius</i>)
<i>Paed.</i>	Clement, <i>Paedagogus</i> (<i>Tutor</i>)
<i>Pan.</i>	Epiphanius, <i>Panarion</i> (<i>Medicine Chest</i>)
<i>Pan. Lat.</i>	Anon. <i>XII Panegyrici latini</i> (<i>Twelve Latin Panegyrics</i>)
<i>Pass. Perp.</i>	Anon. <i>Passio Perpetuae et Felicitatis</i> (<i>Passion of Perpetua and Felicitas</i>)
<i>PE</i>	Eusebius, <i>Praeparatio evangelica</i> (<i>Preparation for the Gospel</i>)
<i>Phil., HE</i>	Philostorgius, <i>Historia ecclesiastica</i> (<i>Ecclesiastical History</i>)
<i>Pliny, Epist.</i>	Pliny the Younger, <i>Epistulae</i> (<i>Epistles</i>)
<i>Protr.</i>	Clement of Alexandria, <i>Protrepticus</i> (<i>Exhortation</i>)
<i>Quis Div. Salv.</i>	Clement of Alexandria, <i>Quis dives salvetur</i> (<i>Who Is the Rich Man to Be Saved?</i>)
<i>Rom.</i>	Ignatius, <i>Epistula ad Romanos</i> (<i>Epistle to the Romans</i>)
<i>Ruf., HE</i>	Rufinus, <i>Historia ecclesiastica</i> (<i>Ecclesiastical History</i>)
<i>SHA Marc.</i>	<i>Scriptores Historiae Augustae</i> , Marcus Antoninus philosophus (<i>Writers of the Augustan History</i> , Marcus Aurelius, <i>Philosopher</i>)
<i>Soc., HE</i>	Socrates, <i>Historia ecclesiastica</i> (<i>Ecclesiastical History</i>)
<i>Soz., HE</i>	Sozomen, <i>Historia ecclesiastica</i> (<i>Ecclesiastical History</i>)
<i>Strom.</i>	Clement, <i>Stromateis</i> (<i>Miscellanies</i>)
<i>Tert., Apol.</i>	Tertullian, <i>Apologeticum</i> (<i>Defence</i>)
<i>Theod., HE</i>	Theodoret, <i>Historia ecclesiastica</i> (<i>Ecclesiastical History</i>)
<i>Tusc.</i>	Cicero, <i>Tusculanae disputationes</i> (<i>Tusculan Disputations</i>)
<i>VA</i>	Philostratus, <i>Vita Apollonii</i> (<i>Life of Apollonius</i>)
<i>VC</i>	Eusebius, <i>Vita Constantini</i> (<i>Life of Constantine</i>)
<i>VCat.</i>	Plutarch, <i>Vita Catonis Maioris</i> (<i>Life of Cato the Elder</i>)
<i>VCont.</i>	Philo, <i>De vita contemplativa</i> (<i>On the Contemplative Life</i>)
<i>VP</i>	Diogenes Laertius, <i>Vitae philosophorum</i> (<i>Lives of the Philosophers</i>)
<i>VS</i>	Philostratus, <i>Vitae sophistarum</i> (<i>Lives of the Sophists</i>)

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Abbreviations of journals follow those in *L'Année philologique*.

<i>AB</i>	<i>Analecta Bollandiana: revue critique d'hagiographie</i>
<i>AClass</i>	<i>Acta classica: verhandelinge van die Klassieke Vereniging van Suid-Afrika</i>
<i>AJPh</i>	<i>American Journal of Philology</i>
<i>AncNarr</i>	<i>Ancient Narrative</i>
<i>AntTard</i>	<i>Antiquité tardive: revue internationale d'histoire et d'archéologie</i>
<i>ANRW</i>	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i>
<i>Athenaeum</i>	<i>Athenaeum: studi di letteratura e storia dell'antichità</i>
<i>Augustinianum</i>	<i>Augustinianum: periodicum semestris Instituti Patristici Augustinianum</i>
<i>Biblica</i>	<i>Biblica: commentarii periodici Pontificii Instituti Biblici</i>
<i>BICS</i>	<i>Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies</i>
<i>BLE</i>	<i>Bulletin de littérature ecclésiastique</i>
<i>BRL</i>	<i>Bulletin of the John Rylands Library of Manchester</i>
<i>Byzantion</i>	<i>Byzantion: revue internationale des études byzantines</i>
<i>ChHist</i>	<i>Church History: Studies in Christianity and Culture</i>
<i>CJ</i>	<i>Classical Journal</i>
<i>ClAnt</i>	<i>Classical Antiquity</i>
<i>CQ</i>	<i>Classical Quarterly</i>
<i>CR</i>	<i>Classical Review</i>
<i>CRAI</i>	<i>Comptes rendus/Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres</i>
<i>CW</i>	<i>Classical World</i>
<i>DOP</i>	<i>Dumbarton Oaks Papers</i>
<i>EHR</i>	<i>English Historical Review</i>
<i>EME</i>	<i>Early Medieval Europe</i>
<i>EThL</i>	<i>Ephemerides theologicae Lovanienses</i>
<i>GRBS</i>	<i>Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies</i>
<i>Gregorianum</i>	<i>Gregorianum: periodicum trimestre a Pontificia Universitate Gregoriana editum</i>
<i>Hephaistos</i>	<i>Hephaistos: New Approaches in Classical Archaeology and Related Fields</i>
<i>Hermes</i>	<i>Hermes: Zeitschrift für klassische Philologie</i>
<i>Historia</i>	<i>Historia: Zeitschrift für alte Geschichte</i>
<i>HSPb</i>	<i>Harvard Studies in Classical Philology</i>

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<i>HTbR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
<i>JbAC</i>	<i>Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JECS</i>	<i>Journal of Early Christian Studies: Journal of the North American Patristics Society</i>
<i>JEH</i>	<i>Journal of Ecclesiastical History</i>
<i>JHS</i>	<i>Journal of Hellenic Studies</i>
<i>JHSex</i>	<i>Journal of the History of Sexuality</i>
<i>JR</i>	<i>Journal of Religion</i>
<i>JRS</i>	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
<i>JThS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
<i>JWI</i>	<i>Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes</i>
<i>Latomus</i>	<i>Latomus: revue d'études latines</i>
<i>Muséon</i>	<i>Le Muséon: revue d'études orientales</i>
<i>NT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum: An International Quarterly for New Testament and Related Studies</i>
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
<i>P&P</i>	<i>Past & Present: A Journal of Historical Studies</i>
<i>PBA</i>	<i>Papers of the British Academy</i>
<i>PBSR</i>	<i>Papers of the British School at Rome</i>
<i>Phoenix</i>	<i>Phoenix: Journal of the Classical Association of Canada</i>
<i>Prudentia</i>	<i>Prudentia: A Journal Devoted to the Thought, Literature and History of the Ancient World, and to their Tradition</i>
<i>RAC</i>	<i>Rivista di archeologia cristiana</i>
<i>RecSR</i>	<i>Recherches de science religieuse</i>
<i>RScR</i>	<i>Rivista di storia del cristianesimo</i>
<i>RSR</i>	<i>Revue des sciences religieuses</i>
<i>RThPh</i>	<i>Revue de théologie et de philosophie</i>
<i>SCI</i>	<i>Scripta Classica Israelica: Yearbook of the Israel Society for the Promotion of Classical Studies</i>
<i>SO</i>	<i>Symbolae Osloenses: Norwegian Journal of Greek and Latin Studies</i>
<i>StudPhilon</i>	<i>Studia Philonica Annual</i>
<i>Th&Ph</i>	<i>Theologie und Philosophie</i>
<i>Traditio</i>	<i>Traditio: Studies in Ancient and Medieval History</i>
<i>VChr</i>	<i>Vigiliae Christianae: A Review of Early Christian Life and Languages</i>

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<i>YCLS</i>	<i>Yale Classical Studies</i>
<i>ZAC</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für antikes Christentum</i>
<i>ZKG</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte</i>
<i>ZNTW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche</i>
<i>ZPE</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i>
<i>ZRGG</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte</i>