

UDC 94(37)(092)
DOI 10.24919/2519-058X.19.233839

Dmytro PUKHOVETS

PhD (History), Associate Professor; Associate Professor of the Department of History of the Ancient World and the Middle Ages, Faculty of History, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, 60 Volodymyrska Street, Kyiv, Ukraine, postal code 01601 (pukhovets@knu.ua)

ORCID: 0000-0002-5201-0396

Oksana OVERCHUK

PhD (Philology), Associate Professor of Folklore Studies Department, Institute of Philology Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, 14 Taras Shevchenko Bul., Kyiv, Ukraine, postal code 01601 (oksoverchuk@gmail.com)

ORCID: 0000-0002-8228-6043

Дмитро ПУХОВЕЦЬ

кандидат історичних наук, доцент, доцент кафедри стародавнього світу та середніх віків історичного факультету Київського національного університету імені Тараса Шевченка. вул. Володимирська, 60, м. Київ, Україна, індекс 01601 (pukhovets@knu.ua)

Оксана ОВЕРЧУК

кандидатка філологічних наук, доцентка кафедри фольклористики Інституту філології Київського національного університету імені Тараса Шевченка, б-р Тараса Шевченка, 14, м. Київ, Україна, індекс 01601 (oksoverchuk@gmail.com)

Bibliographic Description of the Article: Pukhovets, D. & Overchuk, O. (2021). Emperor Julian and the Antiochians: Conflict of Cultural Traditions. *Skhidnoievropejskyi istorychnyi visnyk [East European Historical Bulletin]*, 19, 8–18. doi: 10.24919/2519-058X.19.233839

**EMPEROR JULIAN AND THE ANTIOCHIANS:
CONFLICT OF CULTURAL TRADITIONS**

Abstract. *The purpose of the article is to explore the conflict over cultural traditions that took place between the Antiochians and emperor Julian in July of 362 – March of 363 AD. This confrontation is described in works by the participants, Julian and Libanius, as well as by other authors, both Christian and pagan, which provides with sufficient material to determine the aim of Julian's arrival in Antioch, to clarify the socio-political situation in the city, to highlight the emperor's main policies and to shed light onto the parties' perception of the conflict. The methodology is based on the principles of scientificity, historicism, systematics as well as the use of general scientific methods (induction and deduction, analysis and synthesis) and special historical methods (historical and systemic, historical and genetic, methods of historiographical and source analysis). The scientific novelty consists in the fact that it is the first attempt in the Ukrainian historiography to explore the cultural aspect of the conflict between Julian and the inhabitants of Antioch. The research results in the following conclusions. The crisis resulted primarily from Julian's intention to reverse cultural trends: the emperor intended to turn Antioch into the foothold for his reforms, so he focused on solving economic problems and, most importantly, on revitalizing pagan cults. Each of the policies failed due to a misunderstanding between*

Julian and the Antiochians as well as communication problems. The emperor's economic rulings only exacerbated the food problems; his innovations in the governmental bodies met resistance from the curiales. The bitterest failure was the attempt to act upon religious and cultural traditions: Antiochian Christians refused to be converted to paganism, while religiously indifferent people were frightened by Julian's fanaticism and obsession with this topic. Julian's cultural ignorance prevented him from realizing the importance of his visits to the theatre that was primarily a platform for the authority to hear the public opinion in the form of acclamations. The crisis was escalated, among other factors, by the emperor's personality: he expected his subjects not only to accept his reforms but also to vigorously support them and admire him as the ruler, which was impossible in those circumstances.

Key words: *emperor Julian, Libanius, the Antiochians, conflict, cultural traditions, paganism, Christianity.*

ІМПЕРАТОР ЮЛІАН І НАРОД АНТІОХІЇ: КОНФЛІКТ КУЛЬТУРНИХ ТРАДИЦІЙ

Анотація. *Мета дослідження* полягає у конфлікті культурних традицій, який відбувся між імператором Юліаном та народом Антіохії в липні 362 р. – березні 363 р. н.е. Це зіткнення описується в роботах учасників, імператора Юліана та Лібанія, а також інших авторів як язичницьких, так і християнських, що забезпечує достатнім матеріалом для визначення мети приїзду Юліана до Антіохії, для з'ясування соціально-політичної ситуації в місті, для висвітлення основних векторів політики Юліана та для вивчення сприйняття конфлікту його учасниками. **Методологія дослідження** спирається на принципи науковості, історизму, системності, а також на використання загальнонаукових методів (індукції та дедукції, аналізу і синтезу) та спеціально-історичних методів (історико-системний, історико-генетичний, методи історіографічного та джерелознавчого аналізу). **Наукова новизна** статті полягає у тому, що вона є першою спробою у вітчизняній історіографії дослідити культурний аспект конфлікту Юліана з мешканцями Антіохії. Дослідження привело до таких **висновків**. Криза була спровокована першочергово наміром Юліана повернути назад культурні традиції: імператор планував перетворити Антіохію на форпост своїх реформ, тому й зосередився на розв'язанні економічних проблем та, найголовніше, на відродженні поганських культів. Кожна з цих реформ зазнала поразки через непорозуміння між Юліаном та антіохійцями, а також через проблеми комунікації. Економічні рішення імператора лише загострили проблему харчів у місті; його адміністративні нововведення натикнулися на опір з боку куріалів. Найприкрішою поразкою закінчилась спроба імператора вплинути на релігійні та культурні традиції: антіохійці-християни відмовилися повертатися до язичництва, натомість мени релігійні люди були відлякані фанатичністю Юліана та його зацикленістю на цю тему. Юліан виявив "культурну нечутливість" і не зрозумів, що візити до театру важливі для правителя, оскільки театр виконував функцію платформи для висловлення суспільної думки через акламації. Розгортанню конфронтації сприяв і характер самого імператора. Юліан вимагав не просто прийняття своєї політики, а енергійного схвалення як себе самого правителя, що було неможливим за тих обставин.

Ключові слова: *імператор Юліан, Лібаній, антіохійці, конфлікт, культурні традиції, язичництво, християнство.*

The Problem Statement. Despite the short period of his sole rule (361 – 363), Emperor Julian remains one of the greatest figures in the history of the Roman Empire in the 4th century AD. Being a pagan and a philosopher, the emperor became posthumously an idol for the pagans who inhabited the empire in the 4th, 5th, and 6th centuries. During his life, however, most his contemporaries did not understand him. The period Julian spent in Syrian Antioch (July 18, 362 – March 5, 363) may be regarded as the turning point of his rule. The Antiochians did not comprehend the emperor's rich inner world and peculiarities of his policies. His stay in the city ended up in a conflict with his subjects, which has been extensively described in historical sources. This confrontation, its preconditions and development are of great interest to scholars.

The purpose of the article is to analyze the conflict between Emperor Julian and the Antiochians, tracing its cultural causes and consequences. The stages of the research include (1) clarifying social and political situation in the city during Julian's stay in Antioch, (2) distinguishing Julian's main economic and cultural policies in Antioch, (3) researching the opponents' perspectives on the conflict, and (4) exploring consequences of this confrontation.

The Analysis of Recent Researches. The main sources of the current research are writings by its participants and witnesses. The first among them is Emperor Julian himself. When his frustration was the bitterest and hopes to reach an understanding ebbed away, the emperor resorted to an action that was not typical of rulers but which agreed perfectly well with his character. He wrote the *Misopogon* (Julian, trans. 1913) that was put on public display on the Tetracylon of the Elephants nearby the emperor's palace while the ruler was residing in the city (John Malalas, trans. 2014, XIII, 19) (see also (Gleason, 1986, p. 106)). The speech is a camouflaged self-deprecating satire: the emperor is ironic about his appearance, namely his beard, he tells how, when in Lutetia, he felt sick, etc. (Julian, trans. 1913, 338B, 342A) (see also (Alonso-Nunes, 1979, p. 321)). The *Misopogon* is, in fact, the emperor's own apologia where he opposes himself as a pagan emperor-philosopher and his ascetic lifestyle to the Antiochians' effeminate purposeless life. The date of the text may be deduced from the writing itself: it was written during the seventh month of Julian's stay in Antioch (Julian, trans. 1913, 344A), i.e., within the period between January 18 to February 18, 363. Some modern researchers are inclined to assign an earlier date: Gleason, for example, believes that the text was written shortly after the New Year celebration as 'festive satire' (Gleason, 1986, p. 108). Others argue for a later date. Thus, van Hoof and van Nuffelen believe that the speech was made public just before Julian's departure from Antioch so that he could have the last word in the crisis (van Hoof & van Nuffelen, 2011, pp. 174–175).

Another witness of Julian's stay in Antioch was the city's outstanding rhetor Libanius. At that time, he was relatively young, under 50, which is not much taking into account that he lived to his 80th birthday. By 363, he had already become a well-known rhetor. He was also pagan, and these two features won the emperor's great respect. Besides, as official speaker of Antioch, Libanius was obliged to compose speeches addressed to the emperor during his stay in the principal city of Syria. As a result, it is quite natural that Libanius created seven speeches (*Orations XII – XVIII*) in Julian's honour (modern scholars even distinguish the "Julianian" period in the orator's heritage (Kurbatov, 1990, p. 62)). In the context of the conflict between Julian and the Antiochians, there are two most informative speeches by Libanius: *Oration XV. The Embassy to Julian* and *Oration XVI. To the Antiochians, On the Emperor's Anger*. Both *Orations* were written after Julian had left the city. The former speech aims at persuading Julian to temper his wrath and return to Antioch after the completion of the Persian campaign. The latter is addressed to Antiochians: Libanius is convinced that the city should express sorrow and remorse over the conflict with the emperor. Just like in the case with the *Misopogon*, historiographers argue over the date of the orations. In *Oration XV*, Libanius writes that it is the fifth month of the punishment the city goes through (Libanius, *Oration XV*, 73). If the starting point is the date of the *Misopogon* rather than the date when the temple of Apollo was destroyed, then the *Oration* was composed between late May and late June (Julian was killed June 26, 363, during the Persian campaign). However, van Hoof and van Nuffelen admit that the *Oration* could be completed even after Julian's death (van Hoof & van Nuffelen, 2011, p. 181). Whatever way it was, the emperor never heard the speech. As for *Oration XVI*, it is assumed that it was declared in the Curia of Antioch between

March and April of 363. Yet, van Hoof and van Nuffelen argue that *Oration XV* and *Oration XVI* make up one whole and may have been composed simultaneously (van Hoof & van Nuffelen, 2011, p. 184). More information on these orations is provided by church historian Socrates Scholasticus who claims that “these compositions were merely written, and never recited in public” (Socrates Scholasticus, trans. 1890, III, 17). In other words, the orations were meant for a narrow circle, yet it is not quite clear whether these were the Curia of Antioch or intellectuals close to Libanius. Accordingly, one may regard the orations as either the speaker’s public views on the social and political situation or rhetorical exercises aimed at the closest supporters. In any case, they shed light onto Libanius’ opinion of the crisis between Julian and Antioch.

Other sources that the study draws on are works by such authors of Late Antiquity as Ammianus Marcellinus, Zosima, John Malalas as well as church historians Socrates Scholasticus and Sozomenus.

The conflict between Julian and Antioch was an important milestone during the emperor’s rule, so it has been extensively explored in historiography. The publications on the issue include the classical works by Downey (Downey, 1939), a well-known expert in Antiochian history, as well as modern studies by van Hoof and van Nuffelen (van Hoof & van Nuffelen, 2011). Differences between the emperor and the city are analysed in articles that examine the key source, namely the *Misopogon* (Gleason, 1986; Alonso-Nunes, 1979). The emperor’s stay in Antioch is researched in works focusing on Julian’s life (Bowersock, 1997). Also, the crisis is discussed in fundamental studies on Late Antiquity (Cameron, 2008; Jones, 1964). Nevertheless, the issues brought up in this article are rather controversial. They require both an analysis of facts as well as an attempt to explore the emperor’s complicated inner world. These two issues contribute to the scientific novelty of the current research.

The Main Material Statement. Julian’s one-man rule begins with the death of Constantius II in November of 361. On December 11, the emperor reaches Constantinople where he is proclaimed the sole ruler (Socrates Scholasticus, trans. 1996, III, 1). He spends there about six months and then moves to Antioch. The formal reason for the move was the need to prepare for the Persian campaign. However, the military operation was due in the spring of 363, so Julian need not in fact have arrived in Antioch so early, in the summer of 362, which means that Julian had some motives to spend so much time in the principal city of Syria. Most likely, the reasons included his intention to launch a religious reform. Antioch, with its notable temple of Apollo in Daphne, was the ancient capital of paganism. It was the city of utmost cultural importance and cultural traditions: it had its own Olympic Games, the centre of public speaking art tightly bound with paganism and home to one of the most famous rhetors in the Empire, Libanius, who did not conceal his pagan views (see, for example, (Downey, 1939, p. 306; Bowersock, 1997, p. 95)). Julian could not help knowing that the majority of Antiochians had been converted to Christianity, yet the emperor might have assumed their Christian beliefs were superficial and thought that his persistence would help him to bring the population back to their old cults. Correspondingly, Antioch had to become not only the foothold for his religious policy but also an example for other cities of the Roman Empire to follow. The emperor also intended to restore curiae and some elements of traditional self-governance. Antioch seemed to be easier to reform than the capital, Constantinople with its bureaucratic system.

Julian started preparing for his arrival in Antioch beforehand. He received envoys from Antioch, who congratulated him on obtaining the status of the sole ruler (Alonso-Nunes,

1979, p. 323). In addition, the emperor freed the Antiochians as well as inhabitants of other cities from paying *aurum coronarium*, a quasi-forced tax imposed on citizens by rulers when they took over the supreme position (Julian, trans. 1913, 367D; Libanius, *Oration XVI*, 19). He also appointed his uncle and namesake Julian as *comes Orientis* in the city. This was an important position of the head of the Diocese of the East, who resided in Antioch. By appointing a close relative to this post, emperor Julian expressed his respect for the city and, simultaneously, secured a reliable associate who would introduce the planned reforms, in the sphere of religion in particular. During the emperor's stay in Antioch, the *comes Orientis* indeed shouldered the responsibility for supervising pagan cults and sacrifice, apart from his immediate duties (Downey, 1961, p. 384; Teitler, 2013, p. 280). Taking this fact into consideration, it is not surprising that church historian Sozomenus describes the official's death with a certain dose of *schadenfreude* (Sozomenus, trans. 1851, V, 8) (uncle Julian will die in early 363 when Emperor Julian is still in Antioch).

Finally, in May of 362, Emperor Julian leaves Constantinople for Antioch. He builds the itinerary on cultural landmarks and traditions and visits on his way as many pagan temples and altars as possible. In some places he gives a new life to abandoned pagan shrines, in some places he faces open resistance of Christians (Cameron, 2008, p. 68). Right before his arrival in the city, according to Malalas, the ruler visited Mount Casius, where he performed a sacrifice to Zeus Casius, and the temple of Apollo in Daphne (John Malalas, trans. 2014, XIII, 19). Julian arrived in Antioch on July 18, 362, when the city was celebrating the Adonia, a festival in honour of Adonis (Ammianus Marcellinus, trans. 2005, XXII, 13, 15; Bowersock, 1997, p. 96). The choice of the arrival date seems rather strange. According to cultural traditions, the Adonia lasted two days: the first day was a joyful celebration, the second one was a day of mourning Adonis' death. It was the second day, when streets were filled with people in tears, that Julian arrived in Antioch, which could be taken by some citizens as bad omen.

There are controversial data on the Antiochians' first reaction to the emperor's arrival. Ammianus Marcellinus writes that Julian was received as deity and was impressed by the noise of a huge crowd (Ammianus Marcellinus, XXII, 13, 14). Zosima adds that after the ruler came to Antioch, "the inhabitants greeted him warmly" (Zosima, trans. 2010, III, 4). John Malalas, however, claims that "since the people of Antioch were zealous Christians, they chanted insolent words to him" (John Malalas, trans. 1986, p. 178). The warm welcome seems to be more likely: it is very doubtful that the Antiochians were inclined to launch conflict with the emperor from the very beginning; rather, they intended to make a good impression and attempted to do their best to solve their problems.

And there were just enough problems in the city, one of the most vital being the food supply. Judging by Libanius' works where he gives a thorough description of the situation the city was in in the second half of the 4th century, the delivery of food was real Achilles' heel of Antioch. This is what the rhetor tells about Antioch in the 380s: "I saw an old woman carrying a child and crying, literally, that she would die unless someone gave her some bread... Bread became the object of struggle... A weaker one brought home wounds and torn clothes instead of bread" (Libanius, *Oration XXIX*, 3–4). The problem of food supply would exacerbate and reach its peak when harvest was poor and when the city housed a large army before Persian campaigns. It is these two factors that came together in 362. Correspondingly, prices for grains soared. When Julian arrived in Antioch, the citizens cried to him at the racetrack: "Everything plentiful; everything dear!" (Julian, trans. 1913, 368C) (also see (Cameron, 2008, p. 71)).

The following day the emperor gathered the city's elite, including big landowners, and they promised to bring down the prices. Having concluded that the problem was dealt with, Julian did not return to the issue of food pricing during the following three months. Yet, the prices were never reduced. The emperor accused large landowners of this: "the pressure in the market was due not to any scarcity but to the insatiate greed of the rich" (Julian, trans. 1913, 368D). The ruler resorts to decisive actions and starts controlling prices of grains by fixing the allowed maximum price (Libanius, *Oration XV*, 21) (also see (Alonso-Nunes, 1979, p. 323)). In addition, he brings to the city 400 thousand modii of grain from Chalcis and Hierapolis. Having run out of the stocks, the emperor started to transport grains from Egypt delivering them by five, seven and ten thousand modii at a time. The emperor covered the expenses for the Egyptian grains by himself and sold them at lower prices: one could buy 15 modii of his grain at the price of 10 (Julian, trans. 1913, 369A-C) (also see (Jones, 1964, p. 446)).

As we can see, the emperor got down to solving the issue of food delivery to Antioch energetically. Trying to please him, Libanius expresses his deep appreciation of Julian's actions. According to the rhetor, the ruler rescues the city: "If you had not given it [bread] then... the city would be deserted now" (Libanius, *Oration XV*, 8). But, in fact, the emperor's policies are a good illustration of the saying 'no good deed goes unpunished'. Julian's order to limit the top price for grains was sabotaged by some vendors. They preferred not to sell bread at all to selling it at a lower price, which forced the emperor to cancel his order (Libanius, *Oration XVI*, 21). Transporting grains from other territories was not always efficient either: the grains often ended up in the hands of affluent middlemen who either kept it 'until better times' or sold the food in other parts of the empire where the limitations were not valid (Downey, 1961, p. 390; Cameron, 2008, p. 71). It is noteworthy that the ancient authors see the cause of food supply problems in the emperor's actions rather than poor harvest or the army stationed in Syria. Ammianus Marcellinus argues that the emperor "caused the commotion for no solid reason apart from gaining popularity for lowering food prices; and this is such an issue that brings about famine, if it is not handled with consideration" (Ammianus Marcellinus, XXII, 14, 1). Socrates Scholasticus argues that Julian "reduced the prices much more than he should" (Socrates Scholasticus, III, 17) and, as a result, vendors stopped trading.

Stimulating small landowners was another measure taken to solve the supply crisis. Julian divided uncultivated land around Antioch into three thousand plots and distributed them among the citizens. The emperor himself admits that the idea failed: much land ended up in the hands of those who did not need it. Some of the land was never sown (Julian, trans. 1913, 370D). Thus, the emperor had to interfere once again and take the lots away from those who had got control over it illegally.

Julian tried to build an image of the ruler who enhances traditions and traditional values. Correspondingly, one of his policies was targeted at renewing municipal life. Even when in Constantinople, the emperor considerably reduced the bureaucratic apparatus and ordered to extend municipal curiae. A curia in large Syrian cities as a rule consisted of 600 people. Yet, Antioch, however, was the biggest city in Syria, so the number of curia members, the *curiales*, reached 1200 people (Jones, 1964, p. 724). Obviously, this was the number of curiales Julian aimed at. It is worth noting that the status of a curial member was a burden rather than an honour. In particular, it was a member of the curia that was responsible for collecting some taxes. If a tax was not collected in full, the curiales were to compensate for the shortage at their own expense. In the *Misopogon*, Julian remarks on expanding the Antiochene curia: "I increased

the register of your Senate by two hundred members and spared no man” (Julian, trans. 1913, 367D). The emperor realized that a large number of the newly-appointed curiales would not appreciate ‘the honour’ of this post. It is not surprising that when Julian came to Antioch, he found that his order to expand the curia had not been carried out. Then, on August 28, he issued a new order that defined clearly the criteria to select curiales (Downey, 1961, p. 386). Libanius reacted with a laudatory speech to the emperor’s reform saying that the curiae’s quarters had become too small for the number of the people that manned them (Libanius, *Oration XVIII*, 148). Nevertheless, a number of modern researchers do not share the rhetor’s appreciation and consider that the reform of the curiae failed (Kurbatov, 1962, pp. 189–192; Cameron, 2008, p. 548). This conclusion is based on the fact that the Antiochian curia did not actively support Julian and was not enthusiastic about his key initiatives. In fact, the curiales were not unanimous in their opinions of this reform. The expansion was not welcome either to the newly-appointed members or the curia’s leaders. The latter came from several richest Antiochian families who controlled the poorest curiales and were tightly bound with the emperor’s administration. They feared that the expansion of the curia would reduce their influence on this institution (Vedeshkin, 2018, p. 218). The ordinary members, however, should have accepted Julian’s reform willingly because the curia’s tax obligations were then divided among a larger number of people.

Still, the emperor saw religion as the principal sphere of his activity that was targeted at restoring religious traditions, namely pagan cults. Having arrived in Antioch, Julian starts frequently visiting pagan temples and performing sacrifices. Thus, the ruler is proud to report that “the Emperor sacrificed once in the temple of Zeus, then in the temple of Fortune; he visited the temple of Demeter three times in succession” (Julian, trans. 1913, 346B). The pagan ceremonies were accompanied with large-scale sacrifice of animals (Cameron, 2008, p. 69). Their meat was then distributed among participants: it was the way that Julian attempted to engage more people in the ritual. But the result was often the opposite. People were annoyed when they saw soldiers, dead drunk and overstuffed with meat, being dragged by city dwellers along the streets to the barracks (Ammianus Marcellinus, XXII, 12, 6). And this happened at the times when bread was scarce and prices were high. During one of the ceremonies, there could be a hundred of bulls killed. Also, Julian was often personally engaged in reading fortune on sacrificed animals’ entrails (Ammianus Marcellinus, XXII, 12, 7).

Some Julian’s religious actions ended up in an utter fiasco. For example, in August, there was a traditional festival in honour of Apollo in Daphne. Julian came to the festival and “imagined ... the sort of procession it would be, like a man seeing visions in a dream, beasts for sacrifice, libations, choruses in honour of the god, incense, and the youths of your city there surrounding the shrine” (Julian, trans. 1913, 361D). But what the emperor saw was only one priest from a local temple who had brought his own goose for sacrifice. Overall, however, the Antiochians did attend the ruler’s religious ceremonies, but what they wanted to achieve was a good impression on Julian rather than to show religious beliefs. The emperor felt that his subjects lacked the religious zeal dominating him:

“For you applaud men instead of the gods, or rather instead of the gods you flatter me who am a mere man. But it would be best, I think, not to flatter even the gods but to worship them with temperate hearts” (Julian, trans. 1913, 345B).

The most important events of Julian’s religious policy are connected with revitalizing cultural and religious traditions of the temple of Apollo in Daphne located in the suburbs of Antioch. According to the myth, Daphne was Apollo’s lover whom the god turned into a laurel tree. Thus, in Daphne, the forest was an important place for worshippers. The temple of

Apollo with the god's huge statue was erected nearby. In the vicinity there also was a spring and a local oracle (Sozomenus, V, 17). At the times of Julian's Christian predecessors, the temple had been abandoned. Julian's brother, Caesar Gallus, had ordered to bring the relics of Saint Babylas, Antioch's bishop in the 3rd century, to the temple in order to strip the pagan sanctuary of its significance. Before arriving in the city, Julian had ordered to restore the temple of Apollo (Downey, 1961, p. 385; Teitler, 2013, p. 280). Yet, the emperor believed that the Christian shrine on the territory of the pagan temple belittled the importance of the latter. Therefore, he claimed that Babylas' relics had turned the oracle silent. In order to restore the oracle's power, Julian ordered to return Babylas' tomb to Antioch (Socrates Scholasticus, III, 18). A large crowd of Christians gathered to accompany the relics to the city and the religious ceremony turned into a protest against the emperor's policy.

A bit later, on October 22, the temple of Apollo catches fire, which almost destroys it (Ammianus Marcellinus, XXII, 13, 1) (also see (Frendo, 2007, p. 86)). There were several explanations to the fire. One of them was a lightning. According to the other theory, it was pagan philosopher Asclepiades who came to Antioch to pay respects for Julian: he allegedly conducted religious rituals in the temple and left a burning candle that started the fire (Ammianus Marcellinus, XXII, 13, 3). The emperor, however, accused Christians:

“when I sent away the body from Daphne, some of you, in expiation of your conduct towards the gods, handed over the shrine of the god of Daphne to those who were aggrieved about the relics of the body, and the rest of you, whether by accident or on purpose, hurled against the shrine that fire which made the strangers who were visiting your city shudder” (Julian, trans.1913, 361B-C).

The emperor turned to repressions: he ordered to close the largest Christian church in Antioch (Ammianus Marcellinus, XXII, 13, 2) (also see (Cameron, 2008, p. 70)). Christian writers Sozomenus and Socrates Scholasticus also mention corporal punishments of the most active Christians (Sozomenus, V, 20; Socrates Scholasticus, III, 19).

Acting as a judge was another Julian's occupation in Antioch. According to Ammianus Marcellinus, the emperor thoroughly considered every case trying to get to its very core. Still, at times, the ruler switched to the issues of greater importance for him and, all of a sudden, asked the parties about their religious beliefs (Ammianus Marcellinus, XXII, 10, 2).

As we can see, Julian energetically introduced his agenda whose objective was, among other things, to gain Antiochians' affection. Yet, he failed to achieve this goal: he overdid in some aspects while in others his policies were blatantly resisted. The very personality of the emperor started to arouse irritation and mockery. The citizens did not like it that Julian rarely attended theatres and the racetrack. The emperor mistakenly believed that he was rejected because he did not participate in popular entertainments: “all of you hate me on account of the dancers and the theatres. Not because I deprive others of these pleasures, but because I care less for things of that sort than for frogs croaking in a pond” (Julian, trans. 1913, 357D-358A). However, that was not the core of the matter. In fact, the racetrack and the theatre were the only places where his subjects could express their opinions and tell him about their needs with acclamations, i.e., rhythmical exclamations. As a result, people took the emperor's reluctance to go to the racetrack and the theatre for the unwillingness to listen to citizens (van Hoof & van Nuffelen, 2011, p. 174).

In places of mass gatherings, the Antiochians start to openly mock their emperor. He is called ‘monkey’, ‘dwarf’, ‘victimarius’ (that is, an attendant at a sacrifice) (Ammianus Marcellinus, XXII, 14, 3), people laugh at his long beard that could be cut and woven into ropes, at the

image of a sacrifice bull that Julian ordered to depict on his coins (Socrates Scholasticus, III, 19) (see also (Gleason, 1986, p. 113; Frendo, 2007, p. 88)). Having said all that, the conflict, however, hardly reached its climax. Libanius convinced the emperor that the disparaging acclamations were produced by very few citizens (Libanius, Oration XV, 77; Oration XVI, 31). In general, when citizens of Antioch were extremely frustrated by emperors' policies, they started uprisings. Such a revolt broke out in 387; it was called the Riot of Statues and described in Libanius' later orations, namely *Orations XIX – XXIII*. The sources do not register any mass resistance movement during Julian's stay in Antioch. There is only a report that several soldiers of the emperor's army were executed (John Malalas, XIII, 19). Besides, the Christian tradition preserves names of several martyrs slain by Julian for their religious beliefs, yet the truthfulness of these data is considered disputable in modern science (Teitler, 2013, p. 288).

Nevertheless, the emperor was extremely frustrated and confused. Before leaving Antioch, he writes his famous *Misopogon*. This communication format with subjects was unusual for emperors in general but it was typical of Julian, who constantly sent messages to the citizens through his speeches. The *Misopogon* was designed to get across the emperor's viewpoint on the situation in Antioch to his subjects all over the Empire. In the writing, the Antiochians are depicted as greedy, vane, dissipated people, interested only in entertainment and pleasure, who tend "to begin ... revels at dawn, to spend ... nights in pleasure, and to show not only by ... words but by ... deeds also that [they] despise the laws" (Julian, trans. 1913, 342B). These people are opposed to the ascetic emperor-philosopher who knows no indulgence, who is focused on spirituality and limits his sleep and food (Julian, trans. 1913, 340B). Julian believes that the Antiochians should follow the Celts' example in their relations with him: "they [the Celts] loved me so much, on account of the similarity of our dispositions, that not only did they venture to take up arms on my behalf, but they gave me large sums of money besides" (Julian, trans. 1913, 360C). The ruler promises to leave Antioch soon and never come back. Soon after making the *Misopogon* public, on March 5, Julian keeps his promise. He planned to return to the city of Tarsus after the Persian campaign (Cameron, 2008, p. 73). When in Antioch, the emperor assigned Alexander from Heliopolis, famous for his cruelty, to be the *consular* of Syria. Julian said that Alexander was the right official to rule the mercenary and arrogant Antiochians (Ammianus Marcellinus, XXIII, 2, 3) (see also (Gleason, 1986, p. 115)). In an attempt to please the emperor, Libanius wrote that Alexander pursued strict policies and, by doing so, rescued the city (Libanius, Oration XV, 77).

The Antiochians tried to soothe the emperor's anger. A large crowd gathered to see him off and to wish good luck in the military campaign, but Julian answered irritably that they would never see him again (Ammianus Marcellinus, XXIII, 2, 3) (see also (Frendo, 2007, p. 89)). Two orations by Libanius were a reaction to the *Misopogon*. In *Oration XVI. To the Antiochians, On the emperor's anger*, the rhetor strives to convince the citizens of Antioch that the emperor's anger is really a problem (Libanius, Oration XVI, 8) (it should be noted here that if he felt obliged to prove it, it means that the Antiochians did not see it as a problem). Libanius believes that the city is indeed to blame for the conflict. The citizens should not have let anyone mock the emperor and should have found the way to silence Julian's detractors: "Who went and administered a thrashing? Who felt any personal grief? Who said to his neighbor, "Come on! Let's stop them, arrest them, imprison them, execute them"?" (Libanius, Oration XVI, 30). Antioch should have felt guilty and shown its repentance to the emperor. The theatre was to close for some time, mimes were to be driven away from the city and the number of chariot races was to be reduced (Libanius, Oration XVI, 41).

The rhetor also notes that the populace is expected to be more enthusiastic about participating in pagan practices (Libanius, Oration XVI, 56).

In *Oration XV. The embassy to Julian*, Libanius asks the emperor to be merciful. The city is guilty indeed but it has admitted the mistake (Libanius, Oration XV, 4). Among other things, the rhetor also lays on the Antiochians the blame for the food crisis: some citizens failed to watch bakers closely, others did not do anything at all, while some could not resist the temptation of a scoop (Libanius, Oration XV, 23). In fact, Antioch always liked the emperor and only few mocked him, but some people are not respectful even to their parents (Libanius, Oration XV, 77). Libanius makes efforts to convince Julian that after his departure, the situation has improved, practicing pagan rituals being one of the improvements. To confirm that the apologies have been accepted, Julian is expected to return to Antioch instead of Tarsus after the military expedition (Libanius, Oration XV, 15). Yet, fate decreed otherwise: it was the body of the emperor, killed during the Persian campaign, that arrived in Tarsus.

The Conclusions. Julian considered his stay in Antioch as an important stage of his reign. He intended to turn the city into the foothold of his cultural reforms, a successful example that the Empire would follow. Yet, the planned reforms did not correlate with the Antiochians' needs because the citizens were more preoccupied with food prices.

The main reforms of Julian's policies in Antioch concerned both political and cultural issues: solution of the food supply crisis, modification of municipal governance, and revitalization of pagan traditions. Julian failed to implement any of them to a greater or lesser extent. Julian's attempt to fix grain prices only exacerbated the food problem. His initiatives to expand the curia were not received favourably by some curiales, which deprived Julian of the institution's support. His attempts to convert Christians of Antioch to paganism and, thus, to revitalize cultural traditions were not successful either: zealous Christians were true to their faith, while religiously indifferent people were terrified by Julian's fanaticism and obsession with the issue. Besides, Julian and the Antiochians failed to understand each other and experienced communication problems: Julian did not realise that his presence in the theatre was important for the city dwellers because it was the place where they could use acclamations to communicate their opinions to him. However, one should not overestimate the Antiochians' hatred for the emperor, since the conflict did not reach its climax that would inevitably have led to an uprising, the way it happened many times throughout the history of Antioch. Yet, there was no outbreak that time. It was Julian's personality that fuelled the conflict.

On an emotional level, the situation was as follows. The emperor aspired to gain popularity with the Antiochians and did everything he could to achieve the goal, but all his attempts failed. As a result, the initial enthusiasm was replaced by hostile apathy of a person whose plan collapsed. After the failure, the coveted goal tends to turn into a trigger of anger and aggression. What Julian sought was not only being accepted as a politician; it also was gaining people's support for his reforms. It was important for him to be accepted as a personality, whose traits are respected and set as an example to follow. Julian thought that the key to the Antiochians' hearts and minds would be the image of a wise emperor-philosopher who took care of his subjects and encouraged to return to traditional values. This image, however, was distorted due to communication problems: the subjects perceived his ascetic lifestyle as barbarity, his focus on spirituality was taken for arrogance and excessive sophistication, his pagan beliefs were interpreted as attempts to solve ephemeral problems instead of dealing with real ones (famine). Julian's supporters might have had a reductionist view on the situation: down-to-earth philistines failed to accept the idealistic and intellectual

ruler. Yet, Julian's expectations were set much too high indeed: he expected them not only to agree with his policies silently (which they to a certain extent did) but also to admire his personality and to carry out his orders enthusiastically. Eventually, the emperor fell victim to his great expectations that could hardly have been met.

Acknowledgement. The authors of the article are sincerely grateful to all members of the editorial board for the advice provided during doing the research and writing the article.

Financing. The authors did not receive any financial support for doing the research and writing the article.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alonso-Nunes, J. M.** (1979). The Emperor Julian's "Misopogon" and the Conflict Between Christianity and Paganism. *Ancient Society*, 10, 311–324. [in English]
- Ammianus Marcellinus.** (2005). *The Roman History*. Moscow: AST, 631 p. [in English]
- Bowersock, G. W.** (1997). *Julian the Apostate*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 156 p. [in English]
- Cameron, A.** (Ed.). (2008). *The Cambridge Ancient History* (Vol. 13). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [in English]
- Downey, G.** (1939). Julian the Apostate at Antioch. *Church History*, 8 (4), 303–315. [in English]
- Downey, G.** (1961). *A History of Antioch in Syria from Seleucus to the Arab Conquest*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. [in English]
- Frendo, D.** (2007). Dangerous Ideas: Julian's Persian Campaign, Its Historical Background, Motivation, and Objectives. *Bulletin of the Asia Institute, New Series*, 21, 79–96. [in English]
- Gleason, M. W.** (1986). Festive Satire: Julian's Misopogon and the New Year at Antioch. *Journal of Roman Studies*, 76, 106–119. doi:10.2307/300368 [in English]
- Imperator Julian.** (2016). To the citizens of Antioch, or the Beard Hater. *Polnoe sobranie tvoreniiy*. Saint-Petersburg: Kvadrivium, 317–355. [in English]
- John Malalas.** (1986). *The Chronicle of John Malalas* (E. Jeffrey, M. Jeffrey & R. Scott, Trans). Melbourne: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies. [in English]
- John Malalas.** (2014). *Chronography. Books XIII – XVIII*. Belgorod: NIU "BelGU". [in English]
- Jones, A. H. M.** (1964). *The Later Roman Empire*. Oxford: Blackwell. [in English]
- Julian.** (1913). *Misopogon* (W. C. Wright, Trans.). URL: <http://www.attalus.org/translate/misopogon.html> (Original work published 363 AD) [in English]
- Kurbatov, G. L.** (1962). *Early Byzantine City (Antioch in the 4th century)*. Leningrad: Izdatel'stvo Leningradskogo universiteta. [in Russian]
- Kurbatov, G. L.** (1990). *Early Byzantine portraits*. Leningrad: Izdatel'stvo Leningradskogo universiteta. [in Russian]
- Libanius.** (1969). On the emperor's anger. *Selected orations*, 1 (A. F. Norman, Trans. & Ed.). (pp. 209–249). Cambridge: Harvard University Press. [in English]
- Libanius.** (2014). *Orations*. Saint Petersburg: Kvadrivium. [in Russian]
- Socrates Scholasticus.** (1890). *Church History (Book III)* (A. C. Zenos, Trans. & P. Schaff, H. Wace, Eds.). Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co. URL: <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/26013.htm> [in English]
- Socrates Scholasticus.** (1996). *Church History*. Moscow: Rossiyskaya politicheskaya enciclopediya. [in Russian]
- Sozomenus.** (1851). *The Church History*. Saint Petersburg: Tipografiya Fishera. [in Russian]
- Teitler, H. C.** (2013). Ammianus, Libanius, Chrysostomus, and the Martyrs of Antioch. *Vigiliae Christianae*, 67 (3), 263–288. doi:10.1163/15700720-12341129 [in English]
- van Hoof, L., & van Nuffelen, P.** (2011). Monarchy and Mass Communication: Antioch A.D. 362/3 Revisited. *The Journal of Roman Studies*, 101, 166–184. doi:10.1017/S0075435811000050 [in English]
- Vedeshkin, M. A.** (2018). *Pagan opposition to Christianization of the Roman Empire in the 4th – 6th centuries*. Saint Petersburg: Aletya. [in Russian]
- Zosima.** (2010). *New History*. Belgorod: Izdatel'stvo Belgorodskogo gos. universiteta. [in Russian]

The article was received June 20, 2020.

Article recommended for publishing 19/05/2021.