

The Office of *Magister Militum* in the 4th
Century CE:

A Study into the Political and Military History
of the Later Roman Empire

Christopher Stephen Bendle (517242)

ORCID Identification Number: **0000-0001-8239-6704**

February 2020

Faculty of Arts, University of Melbourne

School of Historical and Philosophical Studies

Submitted in total fulfilment for the degree of Master of Arts

Principal Supervisor: Associate Professor Frederik Vervaet

Associate Supervisor: Associate Professor Hyun Jin Kim

Word Count: 41, 445

Abstract

The *magistri militum* were the highest-ranking generals of the late Roman imperial army. Emperor Constantine I created this office in the early part of the fourth century with the intention of reducing the chance that generals would threaten the reigns of his sons and dynastic heirs. This was initially a success, and the *magistri militum* competently served the whims of the emperors for many decades. They commanded the imperial armies in war, they were involved in asserting the religious will of the emperors, and their schemes were limited to low-level politicking.

Over time, however, the *magistri* began to resist the dominance of the emperors, and this thesis will seek to explore how the role of the *magistri* changed through certain decisive moments over the course of the late fourth century. These instances included when the *magister* Merobaudes raised a four-year old child as a puppet emperor under his control, or when Arbogast refused an order of dismissal from the same emperor, now an adult. The final decisive moment of the fourth century was Stilicho's appointment as guardian and protector of the emperor Honorius. These events dramatically changed the political sphere of the western Empire, which would continue to be dominated by generals until the dissolution of imperial control in western Europe. This phenomenon will be compared to different but concurrent developments in the eastern Empire, which contrastingly resulted in the dilution of military power and instead the supremacy of civil officials.

To further develop our understanding of the office of *magister militum*, this thesis will also conduct a prosopographical study. This will look at the religious beliefs of the *magistri*, the career path that lead an ambitious man to this office, as well as the ethnic identity of the *magistri*. The conclusions drawn from this study will show that the most potent *magistri* shared certain important traits that made them predisposed to seeking and achieving this massive degree of power.

Preface

I would like to acknowledge and thank the University of Melbourne and the Australian Commonwealth Government for providing me with the Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship, which has been an incredibly beneficial source of funding during my Master of Arts degree.

Acknowledgments

My most profound gratitude goes to Dr Frederik Vervaet, who has provided me with years of support, advice, and guidance over the course of not only my current Postgraduate studies but also my Undergraduate. The same can be said of the invaluable expertise and assistance provided by Dr Hyun Jin Kim. I would also like to extend my thanks to all the staff at the University of Melbourne that have supported me, especially Dr Tim Parkin and Dr Louise Hitchcock, as well as Dr Sean Scalmer and Dr Zoe Laidlaw for chairing my supervisory committees. Conversations with Dr David Parnell, Dr Mark Hebblewhite, Dr Benet Salway, Dr Ronald Ridley, and Commander Andrea Argirides has also proven most beneficial and I am grateful for their guidance. All the members of the University of Melbourne Classics and Archaeology Postgraduate Society have my gratitude for making this time so enjoyable. Further thanks belong to my family, especially my mum and dad for their never-ending love and encouragement to pursue my passion for history, and my wife, Stasha, for all the happiness she brings me.

Table of Contents

List of Tables.....	8
Introduction.....	9
State of the Question.....	12
Sources.....	18
Chapter One: The <i>Magistri Militum</i> from 341 to 363 CE.....	22
1.1 The First Attested <i>Magistri</i>	24
1.2 Two Magisterial Usurpers.....	27
1.3 Ammianus' Account of the <i>Magistri Militum</i>	32
1.4 Julian's Western Roman Empire.....	38
1.5 Julian and Jovian as Sole Emperors, 361 to 364 CE.....	45
Chapter Two: The <i>Magistri Militum</i> from 364 to 395 CE.....	52
2.1 Valentinian's Western Roman Empire.....	55
2.2 Valens' Eastern Empire.....	64
2.3 Crisis along the Danube.....	68
2.4 The First Civil War of the Late Fourth Century: Magnus Maximus, Valentinian II, and Theodosius I.....	76
2.5 The Second Civil War of the Late Fourth Century: The Rise and Fall of Arbogast as the Most Powerful <i>Magister Militum</i>	83
Chapter Three: The Prosopography of the <i>Magistri Militum</i>	80
3.1 The Religious Beliefs of the <i>Magistri Militum</i>	91
3.1.1 Introduction.....	91
3.1.2 Survey.....	94
3.1.3 Discussion.....	96
3.2 The Fourth Century Career Path and the Hierarchy of Military Offices.....	102
3.2.1 Introduction.....	102

3.2.2 Survey.....	105
3.2.3 Discussion.....	115
3.3 The Identity of the <i>Magistri Militum</i> : Barbarian, Roman, or Something in Between?.....	118
3.3.1 Introduction.....	118
3.3.2 Survey.....	129
3.3.3 Discussion.....	136
Conclusion.....	142
Bibliography.....	146
Appendix.....	175

List of Tables and Figures

Table One.....	96
Table Two.....	106
Table Three.....	135
Figure One.....	95
Figure Two.....	98
Figure Three.....	113
Figure Four.....	135
Figure Five.....	138

Introduction

One day in early 392, the emperor of the western Roman Empire, Valentinian II, sat upon his throne in Vienne and watched the approach of the *magister militum* Arbogast. Although the emperor was the official sovereign, Arbogast was the commanding general of the western armies and he had grown more powerful than Valentinian. The general dictated the western Empire's political and military policies, relegating the emperor to only ceremonial and religious duties. Arbogast had filled the civil administration with men loyal to him, and he had assumed full control over the soldiers, who followed him despite their oaths to obey the emperor.¹ He had even recently executed Armonius, the son of a former consul and a personal friend of the emperor, as Valentinian protested and tried to protect him.² The emperor, however, had decided to rid himself of this powerful menace. In court and in front of all his officials, he handed Arbogast an official letter declaring he was dismissed from service.³ Arbogast read the letter once before derisively tearing it up, throwing it on the ground, and refusing. In a rage, the emperor ran to one of his bodyguards and tried to draw the man's sword to strike at Arbogast, but the soldier easily fended off his attempts.⁴ Even though Valentinian should have had the authority to execute whomever he pleased, Arbogast clearly held much greater power.

The office of *magister militum*, however, had not always overshadowed the Roman emperors. In 350, only a few decades earlier, another *magister militum* by the name of Vetranio mutinied in Illyricum and was declared to be a new emperor. Yet when the incumbent legitimate emperor, Constantius II, demanded he surrender and renounce his imperial claims, Vetranio meekly submitted and retired to a countryside city.⁵ Clearly, in the years between Vetranio and Arbogast, there had been a massive change in the nature of the office of *magister militum*.

In pursuit of a greater understanding of how and why these changes occurred, this thesis will synthesise the archontological and prosopographical methods. It will not be possible for this

¹ Greg. Tur. *HF* 2.9.

² Joh. Ant., fr. 187; Greg. Tur. *HF* 2.9.

³ Zos. 4.53.2-3; Joh. Ant. fr. 187.

⁴ Philost. *HE* 11.1.

⁵ Eutr. 10.10-11; Oros. 7.29.9-10; Philost. *HE* 3.22-4; Soc. 2.25, 2.28; Soz. 4.1.4; Zon. 8.7; AM. 15.1.2; Them. *Or.* 3.45b-c, 4.56a ff., 6.80c; Athan. *Hist. Ar.* 49-50, 74; Lib. *Or.* 1.81; Zos. 1.44, 1.45.1, 2.45.1.

project to contain a totally exhaustive list and discussion of all of the deeds of all the *magistri* in this time period, so particular interest will be given to those issues where the field remains divided, where the role of the *magistri* remains obscure, and to the events which had the most dramatic effect on the individuals who occupied the office. The first two Chapters will have a chronological structure. They are divided initially by the reigns of the emperors, and then by the years of the two major civil wars that occurred near the end of the fourth century, which involved numerous emperors and usurpers who all employed *magistri*. This format will help highlight how different emperors had varying effects upon the nature of the *magistri*, as well as the differences in how the generals could exert power in separate time periods. Chapter One will concisely describe the *magistri* from their first appearances until the end of emperor Jovian's reign in 364. By utilising the great depth of the ancient material available for this period, especially Ammianus Marcellinus' *Res Gestae*, we will be able to make a number of deductions about the nature of the office and what its duties were initially intended to be. It will be argued that in these years the *magistri* did not have a clear idea of how best to use their position. There were two irresolute attempts at usurping imperial power, both of which collapsed, and the *magistri* tried but failed to take advantage of the succession crisis that followed Julian's death in 363. In short, it will be concluded that the power of the *magistri* was checked by the strength of the emperors.

Chapter Two will then continue from Valentinian I's ascension in 364 and proceed until the death of emperor Theodosius I in 395, and it will endeavour to describe how the power of the *magistri* began to diverge between the east and the west. The Gothic war along the Danube frontier (376-82) prompted the emperors to enlarge the eastern *magisterium*, which caused the command over the armies to be partitioned amongst multiple generals. This allowed officials in the civil administration to counter and overshadow the influence of the *magistri*. Conversely, in the west, the *magister* Merobaudes was able to take full advantage of a succession crisis that occurred in 375 to dramatically increase his own position by installing a figurehead child-emperor. Valentinian II, and the string of child-emperors who followed him, was a weak ruler who did not have the loyalty of the soldiers even when he came of age, and this allowed a string of *magistri* to successively dominate affairs in the western Empire.

Finally, Chapter Three will present the discussion and results of three prosopographical studies on the fourth century *magistri militum*: their religious beliefs, the career path that took a man to the *magisterium*, and their ethnic identification and origins. Accompanied by appropriate

graphs and tables, the prosopographical analyses will focus on delineating the important characteristics shared by the *magistri*. By combining the statistical results of the prosopography with the context gained from the narrative, this thesis will identify how certain decisive moments in the fourth century's military history were taken advantage of by the *magistri* to greatly change the nature of their role in the political realm. These successive events compounded the power of the *magistri* until they became the most influential individuals in the western Empire, overshadowing the emperors themselves. Furthermore, unique traits can be identified for the *magistri* who gained the greatest degrees of power, suggesting that they were somewhat predisposed to take advantage of these decisive moments. Identifying these traits can help us better understand why these developments occurred.

State of the Question

Peter Brown's 1971 work on the religious and cultural developments of Late Antiquity invigorated interest in this era, yet the last major study on the *magistri militum* predates Brown by a year.⁶ The intervening decades have produced excellent biographies of fifth century *magistri*, as well as many works on the late Roman military in general, but the study of the fourth century military leadership has slowed significantly, and the topic dearly needs a revisit.

The importance of the *magistri* ensured they featured in the earliest historical works, but it was Theodor Mommsen who first wrote a study exclusively centring on the *magistri*.⁷ He took a macro-institutional view of the office, and this perspective has influenced almost all future studies, with scholarly discourse being focused almost solely on debating and refining the same questions posited by Mommsen. From the evidence in Zosimus and John Lydus, Mommsen deduces that the offices of *magister peditum* and *magister equitum* were created by emperor Constantine I (309-337).⁸ This was done as a continuation of emperor Diocletian's (284-385) removal of military authority from the powerful Praetorian Prefects to reduce their ability to usurp imperial power. Otto Seeck added the idea that Constantine wished to protect his sons from usurpation as they became emperors, so an approximate date of creation may be Crispus' appointment as Caesar in Gaul in 318.⁹

Marc Landelle more recently argues that the office may have been created later, around 328, as the Prefects struggled to manage their civil duties, especially taxation, and the complexities of incorporating large amounts of barbarian allies into the armies.¹⁰ Landelle also goes against most historians to contend that the *magister peditum* and *equitum* did in fact have different duties, namely that while not on campaign, the *peditum* general oversaw only the infantry, while the *equitum* oversaw the cavalry.¹¹ Landelle makes this argument on the basis that the logistics of cavalry units, incorporating both men and animals, are significantly more complex than the logistics of infantry. However, cavalry was only a small percentage of the overall Roman military, and the

⁶ Brown 1971; Demandt 1970.

⁷ Some of these early works include Tillemont 1701; 1704; Gibbon 1781.

⁸ Mommsen 1889, 260, citing Zos. 2.33.3 and Joh. Lyd. *de mag.* 2.10 = 3.40.

⁹ Seeck 1894, 213-14.

¹⁰ Landelle 2016.

¹¹ Landelle 2014.

logistics for managing tens of thousands of infantry probably matched, if not outweighed, the difficulty of managing a much smaller number of cavalry. Therefore, this argument would not seem to be entirely convincing.

To continue his description of the *magistri* in the late Roman military, Mommsen drew heavily on the *Notitia Dignitatum*, a list of the civil and military offices of the eastern Roman Empire as it stood in the early 390s, and the same for the western Empire in the 420s.¹² Because the western list places *magister peditum praesentalis* first, Mommsen concluded that this office must outrank the others, and assumed this was the original hierarchy created by Constantine.¹³ He further argues that emperor Theodosius I (379-395) reformed the system in the eastern Empire and made all his *magistri* equal to one another, and he believes this explains the differences both between the different titles in the east and west, and the different numbers of *magistri*.¹⁴ A later work of Mommsen's seems to have attempted to find a new, non-institutional perspective by constructing a biography of the fifth century *magister* Flavius Aetius, but half the essay became a revision of his earlier work on the institution as a whole.¹⁵

Arthur Boak continued the macro-approach to the *magisterium* by examining the developments in the titulature and the chronological appearance of the different regional commands.¹⁶ He also further expanded on the reasons why the institution was created. Boak heavily incorporated the *Codices Theodosianus* and *Justinianus*, but like Mommsen, he also relied upon extrapolating information from the *Notitia*, mostly by taking the snapshot perspective offered by it and looking for parallels in earlier decades. When he found them, he concluded that the magisterial system must have remained stable during the intervening years. This early reliance by Mommsen and Boak on the *Notitia Dignitatum* is unfortunate given the challenges that come with using this source.¹⁷ It has been increasingly believed that the *Notitia* was created with an ideological, rather than administrative purpose, although historians are divided on whether the ideology is attributable to Theodosius I, Valentinian III, or even the court of Charlemagne from

¹² Jones 1964, 347; Ward 1974, 408; Mann 1991, 215-19; Brennan 1996, 164-165 and 1998, 35; Kulikowski 2000, 358-77; Scharf 2005, 3; cf. Zuckerman 1998, 143-147.

¹³ Mommsen 1889, 262-64.

¹⁴ Mommsen 1889, 265.

¹⁵ Mommsen 1901.

¹⁶ Boak 1915, 118-37.

¹⁷ Brennan 1996.

whence the *Codex Spirensis* manuscript comes.¹⁸ Thus, while not deliberately misleading, the intention of the *Notitia* does not appear to be total accuracy, nor has any other similar document been found that can confirm its legitimacy or precision. Moreover, another issue that stems from the overreliance on this source is terminology. The word '*praesentalis*' has been used by historians for *magistri* across all periods, even though the term never appears before the *Notitia*, and rarely outside it. Some have gone as far as 'correcting' ancient sources, insisting they are dropping the '*praesentalis*' suffix when they give alternate titles.¹⁹ Given the uncertainties about the *Notitia*, we should be cautious in using the term as a technical title earlier than the close of the fourth century.²⁰ As the *Notitia* records the western *magisterium* outside the period under examination here, and the eastern *magisterium* only at the very end of the period, it will not be relied upon in a significant way.

Research into the *magistri* was continued by Ernst Nischer, who summarised the roles of the different positions and added to the discussion of how each transformed, while Ernst Stein made further deductions on the creation of different magisterial offices.²¹ Wilhelm Enßlin challenged Mommsen's conclusion that the *magister peditum* began as the highest ranked office, instead arguing that the *magister equitum* was superior on the basis that sources which pre-date the *Notitia* almost always list *equitum* generals before their *peditum* colleagues.²² He also added that we do not know of any *magistri equitum* who became *magistri peditum*, but we can identify two *magistri peditum*, Flavius Sallustius Bonosus and Victor, who became *magistri equitum*. On the basis that these men had done nothing to be demoted, he concluded that this change must have been a promotion upwards, and therefore the *equitum* position was the higher one. However, it is now believed that Flavius Iulius Sallustius and Flavius Bonosus were two different people, and their careers are not related.²³ Furthermore, it will be argued below that we cannot be certain that Victor was ever a *magister peditum*.²⁴ Thus, Enßlin's arguments were based on flawed information. A few years later, André Hoepffner authored a response to Enßlin, and he argues that rather than indicating a hierarchy, *equitum* preceding the word *peditum* might be something as simple as

¹⁸ Mann 1991, 219; Brennan 1996, 169; Kulikowski 2000, 360.

¹⁹ Enßlin 1930, 319.

²⁰ Esp. Nischer 1928, 430. This was even noted by Mommsen 1901, 532 n.4, as rare, but the term has continued to be used.

²¹ Nischer 1928; Stein 1928, 186-88, 366-368.

²² Enßlin 1930, 312-13. Also see: Enßlin 1931a, 1931b.

²³ See page 25.

²⁴ See pages 47-49.

alphabetic order, and he cautioned against some of Enßlin's other arguments.²⁵ This led him to the conclusion that the *magister equitum* and *peditum* were probably identical in authority, which would make sense in regards to both the Roman preference for collegiality, and Constantine's intention of limiting the power of the generals. Hoepffner also argues that the equalisation of the magisterial hierarchy occurred in the reign of Valentinian I (364-375), rather Mommsen's placement with Theodosius I.

Although the *magistri* were not their primary focus, the works of Denis van Berchem and Dietrich Hoffman further developed our understanding of the wider military reforms of the period.²⁶ Herbert Nesselhauf continued to rely heavily upon the *Notitia* in his study of the western Empire's administration, and Wilhelm Heil further described the military reforms of Constantine.²⁷ But it is Alexander Demandt's 1970 contribution in *Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft* that remains the authoritative work *par excellence*.²⁸ Demandt acknowledges the problems in relying heavily on the *Notitia* and remedies this by giving equal weight to other sources. There remains, however, some uncommon sources that he did not incorporate. He also created an excellent collation and critical assessment of previous scholarship, however it seems that his perspective remained limited by the previous scholarly foci. Demandt surmises his most significant conclusions to be further answers to the original questions Mommsen posed: the titles, hierarchies, and the creation of new offices. Furthermore, while he was able to provide some contextual analysis, he was limited by the encyclopaedic format. Nevertheless, he created an excellent platform for the incorporation of the *magistri* into many future works on other aspects of the late Roman world.

Since Demandt, there has been no study dedicated solely to the *magistri*. Hoffman provides a discussion of all the different ranks that held regional commands in the late Roman military, including how the regional magisterial commands developed over the fourth century.²⁹ However, despite Demandt's legitimate reservations, Hoffman still heavily relies on the *Notitia*, asserting that the military administration in the western Empire remained essentially unchanged from Constantine to Theodosius I.³⁰ Manfred Waas and Hans Teitler both studied specific subsets of the

²⁵ Hoepffner 1936, 487-95.

²⁶ van Berchem 1952; Hoffman 1969-70.

²⁷ Nesselhauf 1938; Heil 1966.

²⁸ Demandt 1970.

²⁹ Hoffman 1974.

³⁰ Hoffman 1974, 394.

magistri, and the generals feature prominently in studies such as Raban von Haeling's work on the religious beliefs of late officials.³¹ As discussed above, Marc Landelle has also published further discussions of the *magistri* in recent years.³² Studies of the late Roman military as a whole have also remained popular.³³

Overall, the fourth century *magistri* have been approached with macro-analyses of the institution and its organization. The changes that occurred during the fourth century have been concluded to be products of legislation and intentional reform by the emperors. While the agency of some *magistri* has been acknowledged, little effort has been given to how or why these individuals acted the way they did. Furthermore, the importance of personal relationships with the emperors and other powerful people in the Empire has been ignored almost entirely. Some of these problems have been addressed by scholars, although none are entirely satisfactory for the fourth century. For example, the topic of personal relationships was undertaken by David Parnell for the generals of the fifth and sixth century Byzantine Empire.³⁴ Authors such as Ian Hughes, Jeroen Wijnendaele, and Michael O'Flynn have made excellent contributions with their monographs on the most famous and well-documented fifth century *magistri*.³⁵ These works dispensed with the institutional approach and established the agency of individuals. By focusing on the most prominent *magistri*, however, the less well-known generals and the information they can provide about the office is ignored. Meaghan McEvoy's discussion of the late Roman child-emperors also helps describe the developments that occurred in this timeframe, although the *magistri* themselves are not the focus of the writing.³⁶

Additionally, individual *magistri* have also been examined in numerous articles. Bruno Bleckmann, John Drinkwater, and Alan Dearn have successively reassessed the portrayal of the *magister* Vetricianus and his rebellion.³⁷ E. A. Thompson devoted a chapter of his monograph to revealing the problems in Ammianus' portrayal of the *magister* Ursicinus, while Drinkwater

³¹ Waas 1971; Teitler 1989; Haeling 1978.

³² Landelle 2014, 2016.

³³ Ie. Southern and Dixon 1996; Elton 1996; Goldsworthy 2003, Hebblewhite 2017.

³⁴ Parnell 2017.

³⁵ O'Flynn 1983; Hughes 2010; Wijnendaele 2015.

³⁶ McEvoy 2013.

³⁷ Bleckmann 1994; Drinkwater 2000; Dearn 2003.

reconsidered this general's role in the rebellion of the *magister* Silvanus.³⁸ David Woods has also published numerous articles examining the accuracy of Ammianus' portrayal of military officers.³⁹

These recent efforts have added much to the study of the *magistri*, but the crucial developments that changed the fourth century military administration have still not received adequate attention in the modern day. Some theoretical models, such as the study of ethnogenesis, have also only appeared in mainstream scholarship years after the primary works on the fourth century *magistri* were published.⁴⁰ Employing these frameworks to the *magistri* will modernise the research of the office and address the prevailing lacunae in the scholarship. By doing so, new considerations will be offered for the importance of the *magister militum* in the late Roman world.

³⁸ Thompson 1947; Drinkwater 1994.

³⁹ Woods 1995; Woods 1997; Woods 1999; Woods 2001; Woods 2010; Woods 2016.

⁴⁰ Ie. Wenskus 1961.

Sources

There can be no doubt that Ammianus Marcellinus is the best source for the fourth century *magistri militum*. His service in the *protectores* allowed him to personally meet and serve under multiple *magistri*, and would have allowed him access to a vast wealth of military information.⁴¹ This resulted in superb accounts of campaigns, battles, and the distribution of forces. For example, Ammianus was present during the Persian invasion and siege of Amida in 359, and he provides a detailed account of the operations and actions of his commanding officer, the *magister militum* Ursicinus. Furthermore, even though he spent the majority of his time in the east, he clearly utilised knowledgeable sources of information on occurrences in the western court.⁴² Although aspersions have been made about his accuracy, Ammianus' work contains two-thirds of all clear Latin magisterial titles in our period.⁴³ Unfortunately, he only covers the years 353-78, and because he wrote during the time of emperor Theodosius I, he is sensitive towards topics that might have offended the emperor.⁴⁴ Furthermore, Ammianus is guilty of omitting some details, especially when it comes to Christians and religious affairs, and he is overly favourable to those he admired, such as Ursicinus and emperor Julian.⁴⁵

The next best narrative history covers the entire period under consideration, but is a significant step down in reliability. For our period, Zosimus, who wrote in the sixth century, mostly reproduced the now only fragmentary fourth century history of Eunapius, and although it is muddled at times, it remains a useful comparison with Ammianus.⁴⁶ The fourth century histories of Aurelius Victor and Eutropius, both of whom probably used the now lost so-called '*Kaisergeschichte*', is also useful for the early part of our period, as is the twelfth century history of Zonaras, who used both Christian and secular sources.⁴⁷

⁴¹ Barnes 1998, 1; Thompson 1947, 2-12; Matthews 1989; Trombley 1999, 20-21.

⁴² Thompson 1947, 44.

⁴³ Out of 92 total references, 59 come from Ammianus, 24 from the *Codex Theodosianus*, seven from other literary sources, and two from inscriptions.

⁴⁴ See note 320.

⁴⁵ Lenski 2002, 4.

⁴⁶ Ridley 1972; Cichocka 1990.

⁴⁷ Bird 1994; Bleckmann 1992; 2012, 26.

Another extremely useful source is the *Codex Theodosianus*. This compilation of laws was created on the orders of emperor Theodosius II (402-450), and it was promulgated in 438.⁴⁸ It contains a further quarter of all attested magisterial titles.⁴⁹ However, interpreting the *Codex* can be difficult. There is no context to the entries, so it is often complicated to decide to what extent the *magistri* were requesting the emperor make a particular law, or how much they were simply being directed to enforce them. Furthermore, as it was composed in the fifth century, its compilers were more familiar with contemporary magisterial titles, and this engenders some mistakes and overrepresentation of more generic titles.⁵⁰

Another valuable source of information are the many ecclesiastical histories that cover the period, including those of Rufinus (c. 403), Socrates (c. 446), Sozomen (448/49), and Theodoret (449/50).⁵¹ While these sources preserve the Nicene perspective, Philostorgius (c. 425), whose work survives in the ninth century Byzantine patriarch Photius' epitome, offers the Arian view of the fourth century.⁵² Although not strictly an ecclesiastical history, Orosius' early fifth century work, *Seven Books of History Against the Pagans*, also offers important insights into religious affairs. These works provide significant value to this project when they preserve the actions of the *magistri* in religious affairs, including participation in Church councils, personal worship, and enforcing the policies of the emperors. Although there are cases of unreliability, the Church histories are generally accurate and can also provide useful information on military matters.⁵³

The many letters, orations, and panegyrics produced during this period, such as those by Libanius, Pacatus, Themistius, Ambrose, Claudian, Symmachus, Basil of Caesarea, and Gregory of Nazianzus, are another source of important information.⁵⁴ These works often provide extensive details on a particular event or person, and some were even addressed directly to individual *magistri*. Unfortunately, no works written or dictated by the *magistri* themselves survive, so these letters are the closest we can get to personal correspondence. However, we must remain cautious,

⁴⁸ Smith 1875, 302-3; McEvoy 2013, 17. For a more extensive discussion of the *Codex Theodosianus* in the wider context of imperial pronouncements and missives, see: Corcoran 2000; 2014.

⁴⁹ See note 43.

⁵⁰ Demandt 1970, 568. For some mistakes, see: notes 110, 276.

⁵¹ On Rufinus, see: Thelamon 1981. On Socrates, see: Urbainczyk 1997; Leppin 1996. On Sozomen, see: Urbainczyk 1997; 2002. On Theodoret, see: Leppin 1996, 91-104; Wallraff 1997. On all these dates, see: Lenski 2002; cf. Leppin 1996, 273-82. On the interdependence of these sources, see: Lenski 2002.

⁵² Bidez and Winkelmann 1972, cvi-cxlii.

⁵³ Urbainczyk 1997. See note 342 and 380 for discussion of the problems with Theodoret.

⁵⁴ On Libanius, see: Petit 1955; Liebeschuetz 1972; Norman 1969-77; 1992. On Pacatus, see: Lunn-Rockcliffe, 2010. On Symmachus, see: Matthews 1975; Pabst 1989.

as these works were all written with some surreptitious purpose. Letters were often used to curry favour, receive assistance, or even subtly alienate the receiver, such as Symmachus' letters to Bauto and Richomeres, which pointed out their misunderstanding of the Roman cultural practice of *amicitia*.⁵⁵ Furthermore, although the emperors probably did not directly control or dictate the contents of imperial panegyrics, the success of the orator was intrinsically tied to the favourability of their speech, and so they were generally designed to please.⁵⁶ Despite the difficulties, these allow us the opportunity to understand the perspective of contemporaries.⁵⁷

Some other sources used in this thesis are less commonly consulted in the relevant scholarship. Moses of Chorene wrote the most extensive ancient history of Armenia, and he has subsequently become known as the father of Armenian historical writing.⁵⁸ His work begins with the Biblical-mythical origins of the Armenian people, and continues into the mid-fifth century. Robert Thomson heavily criticised his poor use of sources, arguing that he fabricated parts of his work.⁵⁹ While Moses does confuse emperor Theodosius I with emperor Valens, he is quite knowledgeable of affairs in Armenia, including the many wars fought by the Romans in that area, and multiple academics have sought to rehabilitate his reputation, arguing he is actually quite trustworthy.⁶⁰ Additionally, the Palestinian Talmud offers some recordings of the *magister* Ursicinus.⁶¹ This work contains the oral teaching of the *tannaim*, the rabbinic scholars. It was heavily edited multiple times, the last edition being hastily completed after the Jewish patriarchate was dismantled in the early fifth century, so it does not follow a particularly clear system and can be difficult to understand.⁶² Nevertheless, it preserves information that no Latin or Greek source contains, such as Ursicinus' involvement in the Jewish Revolt of 351. Hence, the Talmud remains an important complementary source for understanding the role of the *magistri*. Finally, to supplement this mostly literary foundation, archaeological data, as well as numismatic, epigraphic, and papyral evidence will be used to develop a more complete understanding of the *magistri*, and will be especially useful in providing additional titles and locations for them. This is not an exhaustive

⁵⁵ See pages 124.

⁵⁶ Nixon and Rodgers 1994, 26-35.

⁵⁷ Bleckmann 2012, 24.

⁵⁸ Thomson 1978, 1; Topchyan 2006, 2.

⁵⁹ Thomson 1978, 1-63.

⁶⁰ Ie. Vrej 1979; Topchyan 2006; Traina 2012.

⁶¹ Often called the Jerusalem Talmud, although it is not associated with Jerusalem. See: Schiffman 1991, 227; Jacobs 2008, 3.

⁶² Schiffman 1991, 227-30.

description of all the sources used in this project, but this should be enough of an introduction to the intricacies and problematic nature of the most important source materials.

Chapter One: The *Magistri Militum* from 341 to 363 CE

Mommsen's conclusions on the creation of the *magistri militum* have endured with few revisions.⁶³ During the middle of the third century, the Empire was beset by plague, depopulation, decline of the slave economy, coinage debasement, and an increase in brigandage, factors which exacerbated the damage caused by a series of foreign invasions and civil wars.⁶⁴ This resulted in the greatest military crisis the Empire had yet faced. The Roman frontiers grew porous, and attacks came across the Rhine, Danube, Black Sea, and from the new Sassanid Persian Empire. By necessity rather than any strategic choice, the Roman army fell back from frontiers and formed temporary centralised cores around the emperors, which could only provide security in their immediate locale.⁶⁵ During the 260s and 270s, the efforts of numerous emperors reconquered lost territories and restored the immediate stability of the Empire, which paved the way for Diocletian to formalise an effective new defensive system by establishing a *comitatus* army for each of the four vigorously active Tetrarchic emperors.⁶⁶ From their capital cities in important frontier provinces, and in combination with increased constructions of effective fortifications, the Tetrarchs were able to reassert Roman control of the *limes*.

These changes occurred concurrently with another change in the military's administration. Traditionally, the upper echelons of military command had been reserved for men of senatorial rank. Senators with the titles *legatus* commanded individual legions, and senatorial governors were often used to command field armies.⁶⁷ However, ad hoc commands, such as the cases of Gnaeus Domitius Corbulo in 63 CE, or Gaius Avidius Cassius in 169, are indications that the military administration was not unwaveringly strict, and the emperors could act with flexibility and favour

⁶³ Mommsen 1889, 260. Also see: van Berchem 1952, 100-8; Stein 1959, 72-73; Jones 1964, 608; Williams 1985, 107-8; Nicasic 1998, 77-78; Kelly 2006, 187.

⁶⁴ For general works on the period, see: Potter 2004; Bowman 2005; Corcoran 2012, 35-39. In defence of the use of the term 'crisis', see: Liebeschuetz 2007.

⁶⁵ Luttwak 2016, 146-216.

⁶⁶ Petit 1974; Watson 1999; Williams 1985; Barnes 1981; Corcoran 2008. For an excellent summary of Tetrarchic period, see Corcoran 2000, 5-9.

⁶⁷ Syme 1958, 239, 242-43, 645-48; Saxer 1967, 25-27; Bennett 2001, 194-95, 200-1; A. R. Birley 1993, 155-57.

“pragmatism over traditionalism”.⁶⁸ Although the fourth century historian Aurelius Victor attributes Gallienus with stripping senators of military authority, the flexibility of the military administration allowed the emperors to place non-senators they trusted into important military positions from as early as 87/88 CE.⁶⁹ These non-senatorial commanders were from the *eques Romanus* class, and were often the Praetorian Prefects or the commanders of the legions *I, II, or III Parthica*.⁷⁰ In the 250s, a new corps of junior military officers appeared, called the *protectores*.⁷¹ This institution did not require equestrian status, but instead granted it upon entry. Thus, through promotion into the *protectores*, a path was created for theoretically any soldier to advance to the upper ranks.⁷² These developments sounded the end of senatorial commands, the last of which appeared in the 260s.⁷³

In time, emperor Constantine I dismantled the Tetrarchy through civil war, and united the Empire under his sole reign.⁷⁴ As he defeated the other emperors, he gained control of their *comitatus* and transferred them to permanent, regional stations. These new armies, called *comitatenses*, along with *limitanei* border troops and *palatini* forces around the emperors, created a new ‘defence-in-depth’ system, which combined border defences with reserve armies stationed deeper within the Empire.⁷⁵ Constantine also stripped the Praetorian Prefects of military authority. To replace them, he created two new military commanders. These new generals had no authority in the civil realm, an intentional development designed to hinder their ability to organise the logistics of a potential rebellion, although we will see that this did not significantly prevent usurpations.⁷⁶ Constantine had a fondness for Republican traditions, and this interest may have inspired him to revive the old title of *magister equitum*, the second-in-command of a Roman Republican dictator.⁷⁷ In the Roman tradition of collegiality, and to spread control of the armies between two generals, he created a second office, the *magister peditum*.⁷⁸

⁶⁸ Davenport 2019, 506-8; Vervaeke 2007.

⁶⁹ *CIL* V 875 = *ILS* 1374, Davenport 2019, 488-502. Gallienus’ law: Vict. *Caes.* 37. See also: Keyes 1915, 49-54; De Blois 1958, 37-44; Le Bohec 2004, 124; Cosme 2007.

⁷⁰ Howe 1942, 22; M. P. Speidel 1994, 99-100; Bingham 2013, 41; Davenport 2019, 521-23.

⁷¹ M. P. Speidel 1978, 130-33; 1986 451-52; Davenport 2019, 533.

⁷² Davenport 2019, 537-38, 544.

⁷³ Davenport 2019, 534-36.

⁷⁴ Lenski 2008; Barnes 2014.

⁷⁵ *CTh* 7.20.4; *Pan. Lat.* 12.3; Jones 1964, 97-8; Luttwak 2016; Brennan 2007.

⁷⁶ Lee 2015, 103-4; Jones 1964, 447-62.

⁷⁷ Demandt 1970, 560.

⁷⁸ Southern and Dixon 1996, 148.

1.1 The First Attested *Magistri*

It is an unfortunate result of our poor records of the early fourth century that none of the *magistri militum* who served under Constantine are known to us. There are some potential candidates that appear after his death, such as Flavius Polemius, who was a consul and may have been a military officer, and Ursus, also a consul and possibly identified as a *στρατηλάτης*, a non-technical term used to describe a range of military offices.⁷⁹ Furthermore, Constantine is said to have raised barbarians to the consulship, and it has been argued they must have been *magistri* to be raised so high.⁸⁰ However, this is slight evidence, and there is nothing more known about who these people were.

The first two *magistri* to emerge were both involved in the religious affairs of the Empire. When Constantinople's Arian bishop, Eusebius of Nicomedia, died in 341, his followers ordained Macedonius I as his successor, while his Nicenean opponents instead ordained Paul I.⁸¹ This led to a bitter religious conflict in the city, forcing the Arian emperor Constantius II to command his *magister equitum* Hermogenes to quell the unrest.⁸² Hermogenes was ordered to expel Paul and support the ordination of Macedonius; however, the populace resisted. When the *magister* attempted to use his soldiers to oust Paul with force, the people torched Hermogenes' residence, executed him, and then dragged his corpse through the streets.⁸³

Flavius Salia then appears in the service of emperor Constans, brother of Constantius. Salia is not explicitly stated to be a *magister militum*, as he is predominantly recorded by Greek sources. Like the case of Ursus, these represent him as a *στρατηγός*, a generic, non-technical term for a high ranking military officer which often, but not always, designates someone to be of magisterial rank. This situation occurs for several men under examination in this thesis, and we will use other evidence to acquire more certainty about their positions. For example, *magistri militum* were the

⁷⁹ Polemius: *PLRE* 710. Ursus: *PLRE* 989.

⁸⁰ Lee 2015, 107.

⁸¹ *Soc.* 2.12.

⁸² *Soc.* 2.13; *Soz.* 3.7. *Jer. Chron.* s.a. 342 calls Hermogenes "magister militiae", but *AM* 14.10.2 gives him the title "magister equitum". Balkanska 1980 identifies him as the same man who restored a building in northern Thrace, which would indicate he had already taken up his position there, but this has been adequately refuted by Krawczyk 2016. Hermogenes owned a house in the city of Tyre, which may indicate he was native to that city (*Lib. Ep.* 828).

⁸³ *Soc.* 2.13; *Soz.* 3.7; *Jer. Chron.* s.a. 342; *AM* 14.10.2.

only military officers to receive consulships in the fourth century.⁸⁴ Salia was given a consulship in 348, and so we can be fairly confident he was of magisterial rank.⁸⁵ In 344, Constans, who was a Nicenean, ordered Salia to escort two western Nicenean bishops to Constantius' court in the east.⁸⁶ The bishops were to demand a number of religious concessions from Constantius, and they were to threaten war if he did not agree. These actions were in opposition to Constantius' faith, so Salia, and the soldiers and junior officers that accompanied a general of his rank, probably escorted the bishops in order to protect them and to give weight to Constans' threat.⁸⁷ This was effective, and Constantius gave in to his brother.⁸⁸

The activities of Hermogenes and Salia are informative about the important role the *magistri* played in the Empire's religious affairs, but they should not be interpreted as suggesting that the *magistri* were initially intended to have a mostly religious role. These early events are recorded in the ecclesiastic accounts that were concerned with documenting the history of the Church, and they thus recorded the generals only in this context. Both Hermogenes and Salia, and the other *magistri* lost to time, would have commanded armies against Rome's enemies, but the ecclesiastic historians had little interest in recording purely secular events.

The final *magistri militum* to appear in this period are Flavius Iulius Sallustius, Flavius Bonosus, and Flavius Eusebius. Nothing is known of Sallustius other than his name and consulship, while little more is known of Bonosus.⁸⁹ Eusebius is named as *exmagister equitum et peditum* in a law from 360.⁹⁰ The inclusion of *ex-* indicates that this is a reference to a previously held title.⁹¹ It is likely that Eusebius was *magister* sometime in the 340s prior to his consulship in 347.⁹² Thus, the first five *magistri* to appear in the sources emerge in a disjointed fashion. Without a comprehensive narrative history for the period, we remain unaware of any *magistri* involved in the civil war between emperors Constantine II and Constans, or in Constans' campaigns in Britain and north of

⁸⁴ See note 391.

⁸⁵ For Salia's consulship in 348: *CTh* 10.1.6, 10.14.2; *Athan. Fest. Ep.* 20.3.4; *BGU* 2 405.1; *ICUR* 1 97 = *ILCV* 1267; Bagnall, et al. 1987, 230.

⁸⁶ *Theod. HE* 2.8.54.

⁸⁷ For other example of *magistri* being accompanied by an entourage of soldiers and aides, see: *Philost. HE* 8.1; *AM* 14.9.1, 11.5; cf. *Them. Or.* 16.208d.

⁸⁸ Barnes 2001, 87-93.

⁸⁹ Bagnall, et al. 1987, 222-23. For Sallustius' title, see: *P. Abinn.* 2. For Bonosus, see: Salway 2008.

⁹⁰ *CTh* 11.1.1.

⁹¹ Enßlin 1930, 318; 1931a, 112. The same method is used by *AM* 22.11.2.

⁹² *ICUR* n.s. 1 3164 = *ILCV* 3831; *CIL* 10 477 = *I.Lat.Paestum* 107; *CTh* 5.6.1, 11.36.8; *P. Oxy* 9 1190.15; *Soc.* 2.20; Bagnall, et al. 1987, 228-9.

the Rhine, or Constantius' battles with Persia.⁹³ However, despite their small imprint in the sources, these early *magistri* were awarded consulships, one died in a dramatic city riot, and they were heavily involved in enforcing the religious policies of the emperors. This indicates that from their inception the *magistri* were extremely important actors in Roman affairs.

⁹³ For the civil war: *Epit.* 41.21; *Zon.* 13.5.7-16; Bleckmann 2003. Constantius' campaigns can be found in Barnes 2001, 224-25. Constantius' eastern campaigns can be found in Barnes 1980, 162-66.

1.2 Two Magisterial Usurpers

During the period under examination, many usurpers emerged from the military to challenge the reigning emperors for supremacy, as had occurred frequently in the preceding century. Hence it is somewhat curious why only two *magistri* attempted to seize imperial power in this timeframe.⁹⁴ Vetricano and Silvanus made their attempts within five years of one another, and neither found much success; in fact, neither seemed to try with much determination or vigour. By analysing the nature of their uprisings and understanding what caused these two usurpers to fail, we can theorise that the collapse of these rebellions demonstrated to later *magistri* that this method was a difficult and perilous way of increasing their power.

In early 350, Flavius Magnus Magnentius overthrew Constans and declared himself to be emperor. It is not stated exactly what rank in the army Magnentius had achieved, but as a commander of the *Joviani* and *Herculiani* units, he was probably a *tribunus* or *comes rei militaris*; both were ranked below the *magistri*.⁹⁵ He quickly asserted control over much of the west, but three months after Magnentius became a usurper, the *magister militum* that Constans had stationed in Sirmium was also declared to be a new emperor by his soldiers.⁹⁶ This is the first time we are made aware of Vetricano, but many of the sources emphasise his advanced age and extensive military experience, so he had presumably been a *magister* for a number of years.⁹⁷ The archetypal story of his rebellion was developed by Seeck, who relied mostly on the account of Philostorgius.⁹⁸ This source records that Constantina, the daughter of Constantine I and sister of emperors Constans and Constantius, pushed Vetricano to seize power in order to ensure Illyricum remained out of Magnentius' control and secured for her Neo-Flavian dynasty. In this account, Vetricano is only a half-senile old man that was useful as a pawn.

On the basis that other sources depict Vetricano as a regular, self-interested usurper, Bruno Bleckmann reconsiders this version and instead gives Vetricano significantly greater agency. He argues that Vetricano was a traditional usurper who seized the opportunity provided by Magnentius'

⁹⁴ It has been theorised that Theodosius was also a usurper, but the evidence is slim. See note 382.

⁹⁵ Zos. 2.42.2. See Chapter Three for the military hierarchy.

⁹⁶ *Epit.* 41.25; *Jul. Or.* 1.26c; *Or.* 7.29.9-10; *Soc.* 2.25; *Soz.* 4.1.4; Demandt 1970, 562-63.

⁹⁷ *Jul. Or.* 1.30b, 1.33a, 2.76c; *Eutr.* 10.10; *Oros.* 7.29.9-10; *Soc.* 2.28; *Zon.* 8.7; *Them. Or.* 3.45b. For a discussion on what his role in the 340s may have been see: Drinkwater 2000, 149.

⁹⁸ *Philost. HE* 3.22; Seeck 1922, 98-104.

rebellion to gain a greater position for himself.⁹⁹ Now facing two usurpers as well as a Persian attack, Constantius initially recognised Vetranio as a legitimate emperor.¹⁰⁰ However, Vetranio also cultivated an alliance with Magnentius, which Constantius did not tolerate.¹⁰¹ Late in 350, Constantius extricated his army from the frontier and marched westwards. To stop him, Vetranio fortified the Succi Pass, the main route between east and west, but somehow Constantius got through.¹⁰² Bleckmann argues that it was probably the officer Gomoarius and the powerful Praetorian Prefect, Vulcacius Rufinus, who betrayed Vetranio and allowed the army to pass.¹⁰³ The two emperors met under a truce, and Constantius addressed their combined armies. He called all the soldiers to follow him, and motivated by bribes handed out on Constantius' behalf, they hailed him as their sole Augustus. Vetranio had no choice but to meekly surrender, offering his imperial vestments to Constantius to demonstrate his total renunciation of imperial claims.¹⁰⁴ In return for his submission, he was allowed to retire rather than be executed, the normal punishment for usurpers.¹⁰⁵

John Drinkwater and Alan Dearn both offered their own revisions of Vetranio's story. Drinkwater argues that Vetranio's "heart" always remained loyal to Constantius, and his rebellion was forced on him by the Illyrian soldiers, who had developed a hatred for the Neo-Flavian dynasty.¹⁰⁶ However, this disdain is incongruous with the soldierly admiration for Constantine attested in the sources, their eventual acceptance of Constantius, and the motifs on Vetranio's coinage that portray the Neo-Flavian dynasty in a positive light.¹⁰⁷ Dearn believes that these numismatic motifs can help alleviate the biases in the literary sources, and this leads him to argue that Vetranio never wanted imperial power and from the very beginning planned to abdicate in favour of Constantius.¹⁰⁸ However, numismatic evidence is just as biased and liable to be

⁹⁹ Bleckmann 1994, esp. 44.

¹⁰⁰ Zon. 13.7.1-12; Them. Or. 6.80c; Philost. HE 3.22; Jul. Or. 1.27a-28d, 30b.

¹⁰¹ Zon. 8.7; Them. Or. 6.80c; Philost. HE 3.22, 3.24; Petr. Patr. fr 16; Jul. Or. 1.30-32.

¹⁰² Philost. HE 3.24.

¹⁰³ Bleckmann 1994, 52, 56.

¹⁰⁴ Jul. Or. 2.76c-77d; Epit. 41.25; Philost. HE 3.24; Soc. 2.28; Zon. 8.7; Zos. 1.44.

¹⁰⁵ Philost. HE 3.22; Soc. 2.28; Zon. 8.7; Zos. 1.44.

¹⁰⁶ Drinkwater 2000, 156.

¹⁰⁷ Ie. Zos. 2.44.3-4, 46.3

¹⁰⁸ Dearn 2003.

propaganda as is literature, and it is difficult for Dearn to explain why Vetranio created an alliance with Magnentius if he was always secretly working for Constantius.¹⁰⁹

All these theories attempt to address the conundrum that Vetranio seems to have initially acted as a typical and ambitious usurper, but then suddenly changed his approach and readily submitted to Constantius. The army, its officers, the civil administrators, and other important individuals like Constantina, all would have influenced Vetranio's choices. But as the experienced military commander, he may have also understood the dire situation he was in. Julian's statement that Constantius had inferior forces is probably not to be believed as it comes from a panegyric intended to celebrate and praise the eastern emperor, and portraying him in the weaker position but still emerging successful served Julian's purposes.¹¹⁰ It is more likely that Constantius had brought an appropriately large army, as the main eastern field army would have been with him on the Persian frontier. Thus, once Vetranio lost his defensive advantage at the Succi Pass, he was probably aware that he faced a battle he was unlikely to win. It seems likely to me that he then sought to make an agreement with Constantius, not out of loyalty, but in the hopes of preserving his life.

The second magisterial usurper, Silvanus, was a *tribunus* in Magnentius' army, but just prior to the crucial 351 Battle of Mursa, he deserted with his soldiers to Constantius.¹¹¹ Sometime after this, possibly in the winter of 351-52, Constantius rewarded Silvanus for his timely defection by promoting him to *magister peditum* in Gaul.¹¹² From Cologne, a great distance from the imperial

¹⁰⁹ Dearn 2003, 178, writes that because neither Magnentius nor Vetranio minted coins featuring the other's image, they never had an alliance, but this is a difficult position to hold against the weight of the literary evidence that confirms an alliance between the two usurpers. For a discussion of some of the problems of numismatic evidence during this period, see Szidat 1981.

¹¹⁰ Jul. Or. 1.31a-b.

¹¹¹ Zon. 13.8 relates that Silvanus went over to Constantius with a regiment of infantry, while Jul. Or. 1.48b, 2.97c and AM 15.5.33 seem to agree that it was actually cavalry. Aur. Vic. Caes. 42.14 leaves the details of the desertion out.

¹¹² Ammianus called him "pedestris militiae rector" (15.5.2) as well as "magister peditum" (16.2.4), while Aurelius Victor calls him "pedestre ad magisterium" (42.14). CTh 7.1.2 is recorded from the year 349 and gives Silvanus the title of *comes et magister equitum et peditum*. However, the manuscript seems to be faulty, because it records Constantine's name rather than that of Constantius. Thus, we can presume this law was particularly poorly created or transmitted, and therefore we should not doubt the chronology of Silvanus' career that is offered by the other sources. Furthermore, because this particular form of a magisterial title is not repeated until the late 360s, we can also doubt that it was given to Silvanus (CIL III 10596 = ILS 762). CTh 8.7.3 is also dated to 349 and gives Silvanus the different title of *comes et magister militum*, but it is probably similarly mistaken, because it is issued by Constantius alone, not Constans, who was still alive in 349. For more discussion, see: Demandt 1970, 568.

court in Milan, Silvanus became the target of a plot by a low ranking official named Dynamius, who forged letters to make it appear as if Silvanus was plotting to overthrow Constantius and install himself as emperor.¹¹³ The plot was eventually revealed as false, but it had so severely tarnished Silvanus' reputation that he felt his life was in extreme peril. He thought to flee to his countrymen, the Franks, but was advised that they would either kill him or turn him over to Constantius for a bounty.¹¹⁴ And so it was with great irony, given the plot that had targeted him, that Silvanus felt he must make a real attempt to seize imperial power on 11 August 355.¹¹⁵ Silvanus' reign only lasted twenty-eight days before some of his own soldiers assassinated him, which will be explored more in the following section.

Thus, both magisterial usurpers quickly failed in their attempts. Compared to Magnentius, who over the course of his rebellion established control over most of the west, suppressed a resistance in Rome, appointed a Caesar, and fought multiple bloody battles against Constantius, both Vetranio and Silvanus are sorely lacklustre rebels.¹¹⁶ The question we must still consider is why more fourth century *magistri* did not usurp imperial power, as the top generals had been wont to do for much of the previous century. Possible theories include that, as Constantine intended, the *magistri* had difficulty creating the necessary relationships with civil officials and lower ranked officers, as well as gaining the crucial loyalty of the rank and file.¹¹⁷ While it is true that Vetranio and Silvanus were both brought down by the betrayal of various groups within their rebellions, and some future *magistri* would also suffer at the hands of civil officials, others formed positive, working relationships with those in the civil sector, indicating this was not an impediment to all *magistri*.¹¹⁸

It might also be argued that there were unique, unrepeated circumstances that led to these rebellions. However, while no *magister* fell victim to quite the same plot as Silvanus, the conditions of Vetranio's rebellion were closely mirrored in 365 during Procopius rebellion, but the *magister* in

¹¹³ The story is best told in AM 15.5, and also: Aur. Vic. *Caes.* 42.15-16; *Epit.* 42.10-11; Eutr. 10.13; Oros. 7.29-14; Jul. *Or.* 1.48s, 2.98c-99a; Soc. 2.32.11; Soz. 4.7.4; Theod. *HE* 2.16.21; Joh. Ant. fr. 174; Zon. 13.9; Lib. *Or.* 18.31; *Pan. Lat.* 11.13.3; *Ep. ad Ath.* 273d; Jer. *Chron.* s.a. 354. Forgery was not an uncommon problem in Late Antiquity: Corcoran 2014, 199.

¹¹⁴ AM 15.5.16.

¹¹⁵ Boer 1960.

¹¹⁶ For Magnentius' rebellion, see: Hunt 1997a, 10-11, 14-22; Barnes 2001, 101-8.

¹¹⁷ Lee 2015, 103 n.17.

¹¹⁸ Compare the success of Merobaudes to the failure of Flavius Theodosius in Chapter 2.1.

Sirmium still declined to start his own revolt.¹¹⁹ Moreover, the comparative frequency with which military officers of lower ranks rebelled indicates there was nothing stopping military usurpers in general, but only the *magistri*. This leads me to believe that the failures of Vetrico and Silvanus contributed to the reluctance of later *magistri* to usurp. It is unfortunate that we do not have any insight into what extent *magistri* looked back at the failures and successes of recent history for guidance. Nevertheless, the fact that there are distinct trends over this period make it seem likely they had some sense of past disasters. Furthermore, the *magistri* would eventually discover that it was not necessary for them to be the emperor to wield an emperor's power, but it was only necessary to control the emperor.

¹¹⁹ See pages 55-56.

1.3 Ammianus' Account of the *Magistri Militum*

Ammianus Marcellinus has long been considered the most reliable source for understanding the military history of the fourth century.¹²⁰ His eye-witness accounts of battles, campaigns, politics, as well as a critical use of additional informants, provides incredible insights into the activities of the *magistri*. However, he has recently come under increased scrutiny. David Woods has claimed that “the myth of the accuracy of Ammianus as a military historian deserves to be exploded in the same fashion that T. D. Barnes (...) has exploded the myth of his objectivity in religious matters.”¹²¹ This is a task that has so far not been attempted, probably due to Woods exaggerating Ammianus' flaws. For the purposes of this thesis, Ammianus proves to be generally accurate on matters such as titles, disposition of forces, and general narrative context. However, Edward Thompson sensibly argues that we should be suspicious of Ammianus' motives when he records events in which he had a personal stake.¹²² During his time as a *protector* in the army, Ammianus served on the staff of the *magister militum* Ursicinus.¹²³ Ammianus' own career and reputation would have been tied into the perception of his commander: if the *magister* was remembered as honourable and accomplished, then so would Ammianus. For this reason, he did not record this part of history with the same truthfulness. Despite this problem, we can use Thompson's critique to recognise Ammianus' biases and continue using this source to understand important details that we could not otherwise obtain on the nature of the *magistri militum*. Comparing the differences between the roles of Ursicinus, Sabinianus, and Arbitio – the three most contemporaneous *magistri* to Ammianus – will help to further illuminate the roles of the early *magistri*.

Ursicinus was a soldier under Constantine I, and he can be tentatively identified as a *dux* in Pannonia Superior and Noricum.¹²⁴ At some point he was transferred to the east, and his first recorded command was during the 'Gallus' or 'Jewish' revolt of 351. He is not documented by the Latin and Greek accounts, which state that the eastern Caesar Gallus took command and razed three

¹²⁰ Southern and Dixon 1996, 110.

¹²¹ Woods 2001, 303 n.12, referencing Barnes 1998.

¹²² Thompson 1947, 54.

¹²³ See note 41.

¹²⁴ As a soldier under Constantine, see: AM 15.5.19. For the brick stamps, see: *CIL* III 11853c, 4656; *AE* 1934, 272a-b. For the title of *magister equitum*, see: AM 14.9.3.

cities.¹²⁵ For this reason, Ursicinus' involvement is omitted from major academic works on the *magistri*. However, the Palestinian Talmud recounts that it was Ursicinus who was in command of the Roman force, and it downplays the severity of the revolt, even indicating friendly relations between the local rabbis and the Roman commander.¹²⁶ Furthermore, the archaeological record does not corroborate the violent destruction of cities in this area, indicating the Latin and Greek sources may be inaccurate.¹²⁷ This has led historians to reinterpret this mutiny as a series of local, decentralised, and non-elite disturbances, rather than a revolt led by the elites and involving large numbers of participants.¹²⁸

Ursicinus' involvement in the Jewish revolt can be compared with the Isaurian raids of 353 to further understand the responsibilities of a *magister militum*.¹²⁹ The Isaurians in southern Anatolia attacked travellers and plundered trade ships along the coast, but despite Ammianus describing it as a "troublesome war" it seems to have been more or less a minor affair, as passing cohorts of cavalry and local garrisons were able to fend off the attackers from most towns.¹³⁰ The most difficult part seemed to have been getting the Isaurians to offer battle, because they would disperse into the mountains when the Roman soldiers approached.¹³¹ Gallus eventually ordered Nebridius, a *comes*, to redress the situation, and Ammianus tells us that he was only sent because Ursicinus was too far away.¹³² This implies that, had he been closer, the *magister* would have been sent to deal with the insurgency. Therefore, we can conclude that the *magistri* did not only take command during major campaigns, but could also be charged with managing less important operations and battles, which further supports the Jewish Revolt being only a small disturbance.

Ursicinus' also became involved in Silvanus' usurpation in August 355. He was ordered by Constantius to deal with Silvanus; he was not given an army, however, but went to Cologne to

¹²⁵ Aur. Vic. *Caes.* 42.9-12; Theoph. AM 5843; Soz. 4.7; Soc. 2.33; Jer. *Chron.* 238f.

¹²⁶ j. Shebi 4.2; cf. j. Ber 5.1.

¹²⁷ Schäfer 1986, 184-201, showed that the archaeological record does not reflect the story of a Roman destruction of these cities, but perhaps the story comes from destruction suffered during an earthquake in 363.

¹²⁸ j. Yeb 16.3 clearly indicates a troubled relationship with the general population. For more details, see: Mor 1989, 339-341; Geller Nathanson 1986, 34; Geiger 1979; 1979/80; Avi-Yonah 1976, 178-9; Lieberman 1946, 336-7.

¹²⁹ See Matthews 1989, 362-4, for a more extensive examination of this revolt, and Lenski 1999 for the Isaurians in general.

¹³⁰ AM 14.2.1. For the attacks on travellers and trade ships, see: AM 14.2.2-4.

¹³¹ AM 14.2.6-7.

¹³² AM 14.2.20.

overcome the rebel through deceit.¹³³ Once Ursicinus had ingratiated himself and gained a place in Silvanus' inner-circle, the officers that accompanied Ursicinus – including Ammianus – incited a small group of Silvanus' soldiers to betray and assassinate him.¹³⁴ This story as recorded by Ammianus reeks of strong bias. Thompson argues that furtively duping and assassinating Silvanus was a very dishonourable task, one that Ammianus would not have been happy to be implicated in.¹³⁵ In order to save his reputation, the historian claims that Constantius and a cabal of sycophants almost had Ursicinus executed in the night, but that he was eventually saved and pardoned so he could be sent on this mission.¹³⁶ Thus Ursicinus had to comply for fear of his own life. Ammianus strengthens this tale by comparing Ursicinus to Domitius Corbulo, a “steadfast and loyal defender of the provinces”, who had been ordered to commit suicide by Nero, the archetype of a paranoid and evil emperor.¹³⁷ Furthermore, Ammianus does not specifically implicate himself or Ursicinus as the ones who recruited the assassins.¹³⁸ Nonetheless, there seems to be no reason to doubt the general course of events, and we can use this episode to understand that *magistri* did not always have to command armies, but could be ordered to carry out surreptitious and irregular tasks.¹³⁹

Ursicinus spent the next few years in Gaul before being transferred back to the east in late 357.¹⁴⁰ By late 359 he was again summoned back to Constantius' court and the eastern command was taken over by a man named Sabinianus.¹⁴¹ This new *magister* made for an interesting choice because he was not particularly militarily experienced. Ammianus describes him as cultured but *inbellis*.¹⁴² Although Ammianus may be biased against Sabinianus, his description is supported by the *magister's* later military failures.¹⁴³ Therefore, he must have been appointed for some other purpose than his ability to competently defend the frontier. One possible explanation is that Constantius may have wished to remove Ursicinus from the eastern frontier to prevent him gaining the glory of any victories there. The *magister* already had a renowned military reputation, which increased the possibility of him challenging Constantius' power. If Constantius planned to return to the eastern frontier the following year it would also ensure the glory would go to him, helping him

¹³³ AM 15.5.18-22.

¹³⁴ AM 15.5.30-31.

¹³⁵ Thompson 1947, 3, 43, 45, 52.

¹³⁶ Thompson 1947, 44, 54.

¹³⁷ AM 15.2.5. See: Vervaet 2002, 189-90.

¹³⁸ AM 15.5.31.

¹³⁹ As have Drinkwater 1994, 574-5 and Barnes 1998, 18.

¹⁴⁰ AM 15.13.3, 16.2.8, 10.21; Thompson 1947, 45.

¹⁴¹ AM 18.5.4-5.

¹⁴² AM 18.5.5, 6.5; Corcoran 2014, 204-5.

¹⁴³ Szidat 1992, 110-11, argues against Ammianus' description of Sabinianus as accurate.

counter the growing fame of the new Caesar of Gaul, Julian, which will be discussed further in the following section.

Another potential explanation is that Sabinianus was appointed to further Constantius' new diplomatic approach to the eastern frontier.¹⁴⁴ Constantius had needed to extract a significant number of eastern troops for the civil war against Magnentius, and many had died at the bloody Battle of Mursa in 351.¹⁴⁵ Constantius had then been occupied fighting the Alemanni and Sarmatians, and had not been able to return the remaining troops.¹⁴⁶ Hence the eastern frontier was under-manned and would have difficult repelling Persian attacks, and Constantius felt it was necessary to delay any hostilities by negotiating instead, and Sabinianus may have been appointed for this reason.¹⁴⁷

However, when Shapur learned that Ursicinus had left the east and been replaced by someone less competent, he immediately launched a surprise invasion. Ursicinus was hastily directed to return to the east and aid Sabinianus in defending the frontier.¹⁴⁸ Ammianus now provides important insights into the day-to-day activities of a Roman *magister militum* during the crisis of an invasion. Ursicinus and Ammianus aid fleeing civilians, dodge Persian patrols, confront spies and traitors, and prepare for the inevitable sieges.¹⁴⁹ Ammianus ended up inside Amida when Shapur besieged it while Ursicinus managed to escape and re-join Sabinianus and the rest of the eastern army, probably in Antioch.¹⁵⁰ There, Sabinianus retained the primary position and authority even though Ursicinus was the more experienced general.¹⁵¹ Ammianus tells us that Ursicinus wished to relieve Amida by sallying against the Persians, but was stopped by Sabinianus, who was under orders from Constantius to not risk the lives of his soldiers.¹⁵² Ursicinus was permitted to do nothing but send a few scouts to Amida.¹⁵³ In the end, the Persians successfully breached the walls of the city after a seventy-three day siege.¹⁵⁴ Ammianus only managed to escape by fleeing out of a

¹⁴⁴ Thompson 1947, 50.

¹⁴⁵ Eutr 10.12.1; *Epit.* 42.2.

¹⁴⁶ AM 15.4.1, 16.10.20.

¹⁴⁷ AM 16.9; Blockley 1992, 17-22; Thompson 1947, 48-49.

¹⁴⁸ AM 16.10.21.

¹⁴⁹ AM 18.6.10-16, 18.8.4-11.

¹⁵⁰ AM 19.3.

¹⁵¹ AM 19.3.1.

¹⁵² AM 19.3.1-2.

¹⁵³ AM 19.3.3.

¹⁵⁴ Matthews 1989, 58.

postern gate after nightfall.¹⁵⁵ Afterwards, an investigatory commission would find Ursicinus guilty of not saving Amida, and he verbally lashed out and insulted the emperor.¹⁵⁶ Constantius did not tolerate this insubordination, and he dismissed Ursicinus.¹⁵⁷

The *magister militum* Arbitio provides a highly interesting counterpart to Ursicinus, further complementing our understanding of the different roles of the *magistri*. Arbitio is said to have begun his career as a common soldier, the only *magister* attested as doing so, and then rose as high as the office of *dux* under Constantine I, the same as Ursicinus.¹⁵⁸ His career during the 340s and early 350s is unknown, but Ammianus indicates he excelled during the civil wars against Vetriciano and Magnentius.¹⁵⁹ This caused him to gain a highly privileged position under Constantius, confirmed by the fact that he was the only *magister militum* of Constantius to receive a consulship.¹⁶⁰ Whereas Ursicinus was moved all across the Empire at Constantius' discretion, Arbitio remained in a stable position with the emperor and commanded the primary field army. He operated in campaigns against the Alemanni in Gaul, and probably also against the Sarmatians across the Danube.¹⁶¹

According to Ammianus, Arbitio's proximity to the emperor allowed him to defame and malign his political opponents to further his own position. Ammianus records him favouring his friends, sabotaging other *magistri*, and executing those he disliked.¹⁶² Ammianus even compares him to a snake waiting to strike at potential victims.¹⁶³ However, Arbitio was not actually very successful in this regard. Although he was involved in the fall of the *magister* Barbatio in 358, it was not a plot of his origination.¹⁶⁴ Moreover, for all Ammianus paints Arbitio as working against him, Ursicinus' career progressed normally.¹⁶⁵ Thus, in contrast to the *magistri* we will meet later in this thesis, Arbitio was not able to significantly manipulate events in his favour or advance his own personal agenda, despite his position close to Constantius. Ammianus probably recorded Arbitio in

¹⁵⁵ AM 19.8.5.

¹⁵⁶ AM 20.2.4.

¹⁵⁷ Thompson 1947, 51-52.

¹⁵⁸ On his common soldier beginnings, see: AM 15.2.4, 16.6.1. See page 108 for further discussion. As a *dux* under Constantine I, see: AM 16.9.4.

¹⁵⁹ AM 21.13.16.

¹⁶⁰ Athan. *Hist. Ar.* 81; AM 15.8.17.

¹⁶¹ AM 15.4.1-13.

¹⁶² AM 15.2.4, 3.11, 5.1-2, 5.8, 18.3.1-4, 20.2.3.

¹⁶³ AM 15.12.4.

¹⁶⁴ AM 18.3.1-4.

¹⁶⁵ Thompson 1947, 51-52.

an exaggerated negative and conspiratorial vein because he harboured ill-will over his role in Ursicinus' downfall.¹⁶⁶

The accounts of the *magistri* that Ammianus personally met that are preserved in his work are unparalleled for the details and depth of information they provide. While his work can be subject to significant biases, there are still important kernels of truth that are highly illuminating. We can learn that the *magistri* had incredibly varied roles: they could command campaign armies in large operations or be tasked with the suppression of minor revolts and civil disturbances. Moreover, at times they could even be given tasks with no army whatsoever. Some *magistri* had well-known reputations for military experience, and yet Sabinianus was appointed as a *magister* to de-escalate the military situation and avoid conflict. Finally, *magistri* could remain in a stable position, or be regularly transferred and relocated at the emperor's discretion. The office and functions of the *magistri militum* were highly variable as dictated by circumstances, and we should not be too quick to establish any sort of concrete system, but rather assess each *magister* based on the circumstances they were presented with.

¹⁶⁶ Barnes 1998, 108.

1.4 Julian's Western Roman Empire

Returning to the western Empire, after the death of Silvanus in September 355, there was a period of rapid turnover for the *magistri militum*, and it will be argued that Julian, the Caesar of the west, was responsible for causing many of the changes.¹⁶⁷ Constantius had only wanted him to be a subservient imperial presence, and had appointed generals and bureaucrats to be the real powers.¹⁶⁸ However, Julian was not content with this, and he worked towards an eventual usurpation.¹⁶⁹ It has been argued by Drinkwater that a crucial part of this preparation was using campaigns against the Alemanni to gain the political capital and loyalty of the soldiers that was necessary for a rebellion.¹⁷⁰ By leading his soldiers directly from the frontlines in numerous victorious battles, Julian demonstrated his competency and willingness to place his own life at risk alongside the lives of his soldiers, further gaining their admiration. In this section it will be proposed that sidelining and removing the *magistri* was essential to ensure the renown from these victorious campaigns and daring operations went to Julian alone and was not also shared amongst the generals. Once again, Ammianus is the most detailed source for this period, but he idolised Julian as a fellow pagan and a learned man.¹⁷¹ Furthermore, he was only present in the western Empire for the first years of Julian's time as a Caesar, so the majority of his information is second-hand.¹⁷² Thus, we must work to demystify some of the obscurities about the western *magistri* in these years.

In 356, Julian commanded his first operation along the Roman side of the Middle Rhine where he dealt with barbarians who had settled along the river bank.¹⁷³ After returning to winter quarters, he was besieged by Alemanni in the city of Sens, and Marcellus, Julian's nearby *magister equitum*, did not send reinforcements to his aid.¹⁷⁴ Ammianus does not record a reason why Marcellus did not relieve his Caesar. A possible explanation is that he was aware the besiegers did

¹⁶⁷ For biographies of Julian, see: Browning 1975; Bowersock 1978.

¹⁶⁸ Jul. *Ep. ad Ath.* 277d. Constantius even personally wrote a directory for things such as what Julian should eat (AM 16.5.3).

¹⁶⁹ Jul. *Ep. Ad Ath.* 281b-c.

¹⁷⁰ Drinkwater 2007. This has been identified as a tactic also employed by other emperors. See: Bleckmann 2009, 193, cf. 211.

¹⁷¹ Thompson 1947, 72-73, 84-85.

¹⁷² His source may have been the eunuch Eutherius. See: Thompson 1947, 4-5, 20, 46.

¹⁷³ AM 16.2.12; Jul. *Ep. ad Ath.* 279A; Lib. *Or.* 12.44, 48; 18.36-37; cf. Eun. fr. 16.2. Also see: Drinkwater 2007, 219-20.

¹⁷⁴ AM 16.2.8, 4.3.

not have the necessary supplies for a long winter investment, nor the knowledge of siegecraft to successfully assault Sens. If so, he was correct: the Alemanni retreated one month later after having done no harm.¹⁷⁵ However, Ammianus records Marcellus' actions as shameful, and this is perhaps the same language that Julian used to report the events to Constantius.¹⁷⁶ If this was a ploy to defame the *magister militum*, it was a success, and Constantius dismissed the *magister* for his inaction.¹⁷⁷ This plot would also explain why Marcellus harboured enough resentment that he travelled to Milan to protest his termination.¹⁷⁸ Marcellus' son would be executed for conspiring against Julian in 362, further evidence that there was a sour relationship between the Caesar and the *magister* that went beyond a victimless siege.¹⁷⁹ Thus it seems likely that Julian took advantage of the circumstances presented to him to remove Marcellus.¹⁸⁰

In 357, Constantius appointed two new *magistri* to the west: an experienced general named Severus became *magister equitum* in Gaul, and Barbatio *magister peditum* in Italy.¹⁸¹ Barbatio's betrayal of Julian during the campaign of that year may be the first clear evidence of a *magister* treasonously subverting their imperial commander.¹⁸² After some initial skirmishing, the main Alemanni army fled to some islands in the middle of the Rhine.¹⁸³ Barbatio had boats and other equipment to bridge the river and get to them, so Julian requested these supplies. Barbatio instead destroyed it all and turned his army back to Italy.¹⁸⁴ Afterwards, he travelled to Constantius as if he were a victor, and slandered Julian at court.¹⁸⁵ Drinkwater suggests that there were tense relations between the Caesar and Barbatio from the beginning of his appointment, and Barbatio may have also feared suffering a similar fate to Marcellus if he came too close to Julian.¹⁸⁶ This could explain his sabotage. Matthews, however, points out the Julian diverted from the original plan ordered by Constantius, forcing Barbatio to return to garrison rather than also betray the senior emperor's

¹⁷⁵ AM 16.4.2.

¹⁷⁶ AM 16.4.3.

¹⁷⁷ AM 16.7.1-3, 10.21; Lib. Or. 18.48; Hunt 1997b, 50; Drinkwater 2007, 227-8.

¹⁷⁸ AM 16.7.1-2.

¹⁷⁹ AM 22.11.2; Eun. fr. 25.5.

¹⁸⁰ For a theory on what may have happened to Marcellus later in life, see: Woods 1995.

¹⁸¹ This general, Severus 8 in the *PLRE*, was *magister equitum* from 357-8 in the west, and he shares the name of the *PLRE*'s Severus 10, who was *magister peditum* from 367-72, also in the west. Fortunately, Severus 8 exists entirely in this Chapter, while Severus 10 is in the following Chapter. Therefore it should be easy to distinguish them. In Chapter Three, where they appear together in multiple places, their *PLRE* numbers will be used to distinguish them.

¹⁸² Obviously discounting the actions of the usurpers, and the less direct inaction of someone like Marcellus.

¹⁸³ AM 16.11.8.

¹⁸⁴ AM 16.11.14.

¹⁸⁵ AM 16.11.15.

¹⁸⁶ Drinkwater 2007, 231-35. Also see: Rosen 1970, 94 *contra* Woods 2010.

orders. In this case, the destruction of the materiel may have actually been to allow him a swift retreat and also keep it out of the hands of the Alemanni, rather than direct sabotage of the Caesar.¹⁸⁷ In either case, Julian was happy to let the *magister* leave so he could conduct his own campaign, which led to the major Battle of Strasbourg, in which the *magister* Severus played a key role and Julian's reputation as a commander gained a significant boost.¹⁸⁸

The next year, Severus mysteriously hindered Julian's campaign, and then disappeared. They had first moved against the Franks in northern Gaul, and Severus performed well, cutting off the enemy's retreat and forcing them to surrender.¹⁸⁹ Julian then led his army across the Rhine, and Ammianus records that Severus "suddenly lost his determination" and intimidated the scouts into delivering false reports in order to stall the army's advance.¹⁹⁰ This seems out of character, because Ammianus wrote multiple times that Severus was experienced and capable.¹⁹¹ Ammianus explains that he may have become afraid due to a premonition of his own impending death.¹⁹² It seems possible, however, that Severus was actually under orders from Constantius to assist Julian in defending Roman territory, but not in aggressive campaigns across the frontiers. This would explain why Severus conducted himself competently during the Battle of Strasbourg and in northern Gaul, but not when Julian took his army across the Rhine. Constantius' motivation would have been to ensure the provinces were secure but minimise the glory Julian could win. We cannot be certain if Severus actually died on this campaign after his pusillanimous behaviour, but he was not in command the following year.¹⁹³ There were no major engagements during this campaign, hence there is no easy spot to place Severus' death in battle.¹⁹⁴ It is possible he died of natural causes, but also possible that Julian grew suspicious of his actions and had him executed, either publicly or privately, for treason. Ammianus may be preserving an incorrect story because he was unaware of Julian's schemes, or he was covering them up because of his admiration for the Caesar.

Ammianus does not record whether Barbatio again joined Julian in 359, just that he spent the year on a campaign.¹⁹⁵ Ammianus reports that while he was away, a plot against him was

¹⁸⁷ Matthews 1989, 299-300.

¹⁸⁸ AM 16.12.1-27.

¹⁸⁹ AM 17.8.1-4; Drinkwater 2007, 241-46.

¹⁹⁰ AM 17.10.1-2.

¹⁹¹ AM 16.10.21 11.1, 17.10.1, as did Lib. *Or.* 18.48.

¹⁹² AM 17.10.2.

¹⁹³ AM 18.2.7; cf. Demant 1970, 574.

¹⁹⁴ AM 17.5-10.

¹⁹⁵ AM 18.3.2.

hatched by one of the servants in his household. This *ancilla* had previously served Silvanus, and although it was not Barbatio who had been responsible for overthrowing him, she seemed to have harboured ill-will against him for taking over Silvanus' position.¹⁹⁶ Thus, after Barbatio returned from campaigning, she brought some incriminating letters to Arbitio, who then, likely wishing to gain more favour with the emperor, showed them to Constantius.¹⁹⁷ Barbatio and the *ancilla* were both subsequently executed. If we could be certain that Barbatio had joined Julian across the Rhine we would be able to more confidently infer Julian's hand in the conspiracy, but otherwise we can only implicate Arbitio and the *ancilla*. No *magister peditum* replaced Barbatio as commander of the Italian army, and until the 380s it would be commanded by lower officers.¹⁹⁸ Thus a third *magister* was removed from office in Julian's western Empire.

In 359 Constantius appointed Flavius Lupicinus to be Severus' replacement and he joined Julian's campaigns that year.¹⁹⁹ The following year, the Scots and Picts raided Britain, providing Julian with the opportunity to rid himself of the new general. While attacks on Britain would reasonably warrant the response of a *magister*, it is once again a conspicuously opportune coincidence that Julian claimed it was imperative that he remain in Gaul, so Lupicinus had to be sent to distant Britain where news would only intermittently reach him.²⁰⁰ This served the purpose of again ensuring all the renown for the campaigns of 360 went to Julian, allowing him and his supporters to work towards the goal of usurping power without raising the risk of Lupicinus reporting to Constantius.²⁰¹

Before news of Lupicinus being sent to Britain reached him, Constantius sent a summons for him to bring a significant number of western troops to the east.²⁰² These requisitioned soldiers were purportedly to help shore up the east's defences in the wake of the defeat at Amida, but the true intent was to weaken Julian's position.²⁰³ The Gallic soldiers refused to leave their homes in the west because Julian had promised them they would never be forced to fight across the Alps, and to

¹⁹⁶ AM 18.3.2.

¹⁹⁷ AM 18.3.2-4.

¹⁹⁸ As discussed above, Ursicinus was moved into Barbatio's position, but he never took it up. Lucillianus would be ordered to take up the position in 363, but was diverted to Gaul (see pages 49 for further discussion).

¹⁹⁹ AM 18.2.1-19; Drinkwater 2007, 247.

²⁰⁰ AM 20.1.2-3. Drinkwater 1983, 370; Matthews 1989, 95-96. See pages 56-58 for more attacks on Britain that warranted the response of a *magister militum*.

²⁰¹ For the campaigns that year, see: AM 20.10.1-2.

²⁰² AM 20.4.1-6. Also: Zos. 3.8.3-4.

²⁰³ Drinkwater 1983, 383-87.

cement their resistance to Constantius' orders they proclaimed Julian to be their rightful emperor.²⁰⁴ It is no coincidence that this was done far away from both the *magister militum* Lupicinus and the Praetorian Prefect Flavius Florentius, who were still loyal to Constantius.²⁰⁵

Constantius had also sent Gomoarius to replace Lupicinus.²⁰⁶ Gomoarius was known to be untrustworthy because he had betrayed Vetranio in 350, so his appointment helps to demonstrate that Constantius' policy had changed from appointing veteran commanders to actively undermining Julian's position. However, Gomoarius is not recorded as participating in any operations in the west during the time he was there, and it may be that Julian sent him back to Constantius as early as mid-360.²⁰⁷ Thus, it seems that Julian continued to ensure the *magistri* remained side-lined so he could exert total control over his half of the Empire and its armies.

Once Julian decided full-fledged military action was required to effectuate his rebellion, he ousted those who retained loyalty to Constantius and replaced them with men he trusted. This included promoting Flavius Nevitta to the office of *magister equitum*.²⁰⁸ Julian also halted all traffic crossing to Britain, which prevented Lupicinus from hearing of the rebellion and returning to resist him.²⁰⁹ He would ultimately be arrested upon his return to the continent.²¹⁰ Once these and more changes were completed, Julian mobilised his forces to march eastwards. Although the soldiers had previously refused to cross the Alps for Constantius, they were willing to do whatever was asked of them for Julian, demonstrating that he had masterfully secured their loyalty.²¹¹ The manner in which he conducted his army on this campaign is particularly useful for understanding the role of the *magistri*. During the initial march, he split the army into three groups. He assigned one to himself, one to Nevitta, and the third he assigned to two other senior officers, Flavius Jovinus and Jovius.²¹² Ammianus does not establish a specific rank for these two at this time, but he specifically differentiates them from the rank of the *magister militum* Nevitta.²¹³ Additionally, he indicates that

²⁰⁴ AM 20.4.4-22.

²⁰⁵ AM 20.4.6-9. Although Julian sent a summons to Florentius, Browning 1975, 100, theorises that this was probably not an earnest summons, and Julian may have been hoping the Prefect would continue to keep away.

²⁰⁶ AM 20.9.5.

²⁰⁷ Woods 2016, 183-84.

²⁰⁸ AM 21.8.1. Nevitta is called *magister armorum* here, but is called *magister equitum* at AM 21.8.3.

²⁰⁹ AM 20.9.9.

²¹⁰ Jul. *Ep. Ad Ath.* 281a-b.

²¹¹ AM 21.5.10.

²¹² AM 21.8.2-3; cf. Zos. 3.10.2.

²¹³ AM 21.8.1.

Jovinus was only promoted to the *magisterium* later in the year.²¹⁴ Therefore it can be safely assumed that Jovinus and Jovius were of a lower rank and were probably less experienced, and that is why their portion of the army required two commanding officers.

Julian first targeted the city of Sirmium. Stopping about nineteen miles away, he sent a small party under the command of the *comes domesticorum* Dagalaifus to capture Lucillianus, Constantius' *magister equitum*.²¹⁵ Lucillianus had likely performed well and became noticed in the wake of his successful diplomatic mission to Persia in 358.²¹⁶ He may have taken over the Danube theatre once Constantius and Arbitio left the region in early 360.²¹⁷ Dagalaifus successfully captured him, and Julian entered the city. He would remain in Sirmium and the city of Naissus until news reached him that Constantius had died on 3 November 361, leaving him as the Empire's sole ruler.²¹⁸

This section has attempted to demonstrate that the removal and marginalisation of the *magistri* was a key part of Julian gaining sufficient credit as a military commander in his own right to undertake a usurpation. Mystery remains regarding the fates of many of the *magistri*. We cannot be certain that Julian had a hand in the downfall of Barbatio or Severus, although the circumstances around their disappearances are conspicuous. The reaction of Marcellus to his dismissal is best explained on the grounds that he was unfairly accused of cowardice by Julian. Furthermore, we can be confident that keeping officials loyal to Constantius away from the centre of power was a top priority of Julian because of his treatment of Lupicinus, Gomoarius, and other officials loyal to Constantius, such as Florentius. Given Ammianus' favourable bias, as well as Julian's proclivity for being portrayed as just and fair, we should not be surprised if Ammianus did not record the Caesar's mistreatment and foul play towards the *magistri*.²¹⁹ It is difficult to ascertain how Julian's

²¹⁴ AM 21.12.2.

²¹⁵ AM 21.9.5-8, 10.1.

²¹⁶ AM 17.14.3, 18.6.17; Demandt 1970, 575-76.

²¹⁷ Woods 2016 offers a reinterpreted chronology of this episode that is dense with conjecture. He argues that Lucillianus was only a *comes* at this point, and it was Arbitio who was in Sirmium (Woods 2016, 179-84, 188-89). A full critique of Woods 2016 cannot be placed here, but among the problems is an apparent ignorance of AM 21.13.3, which places Arbitio in the east, not in Sirmium as early as Woods would have him. Furthermore, he argues that Jovinus was actually promoted to the *magisterium* by Constantius, despite AM 22.3.1 as well as Julian's marching order, as described above, strongly indicating that he received his promotion from Julian during the course of operations in 361.

²¹⁸ Jer. *Chron.* s.a. 361; *Cons. Const.* s.a. 361; AM 21.15.3; *Epit.* 42.17; Soc. 2.47.4, 3.1.1; Soz. 5.1.6; Zon. 13.11.

²¹⁹ For example, his *Epistula ad senatum populumque Atheniensem* is intended to save his reputation in the eyes of the Athenians.

rebellion would have played out if he had not sidelined the *magistri*, but military renown was definitely an important concern for emperors: envy of others' successes prompted emperor Valens to recklessly attack his enemies in 378.²²⁰ If this was truly the cause for the high turnover of western *magistri* during these years, it strongly suggests that the *magistri* were still serving at the whims of their imperial rulers and enjoyed limited personal agency in political affairs.

²²⁰ See pages 70.

1.5 Julian and Jovian as Sole Emperors, 361 to 364 CE

The successive reigns of Julian and Jovian as sole emperors contribute fascinating insights into how the *magistri* began to push back and exert their own will upon the emperors, as well as how the military administration could be used by an emperor to establish both long- and short-term security. This section seeks to demonstrate how the *magistri* initially held a strong position vis-à-vis the young emperor Julian, and how he was able to regain control over them in the lead up to his major campaign against Persia. Additionally, after his unexpected death in the midst of this campaign, the officers and officials of the army were presented with the first of multiple important succession crises that occurred during the period here under review. The *magistri* were some of the key individuals in the search for a new emperor and their indecisiveness resulted in the soldiery promoting a candidate of their own choosing, which took the opportunity away from the *magistri* to install an emperor that would favour their interests. Finally, in this section we will also see how there was a surge of magisterial appointments during Jovian's brief reign as he tried to bolster the precarious security of his position.

After learning that Constantius had died en route to confront him, Julian moved to Constantinople and was acclaimed by its Senate and people as the rightful ruler over the entire Empire.²²¹ Not long after, the trials known as the Commission of Chalcedon began, and it seems that they were orchestrated by the military officials. Only two of the appointed judges were civil officers, whereas the other four were all of Julian's and Constantius' *magistri*: Nevitta, Arbitio, as well as Jovinus and Agilo, who had been recently promoted to the *magisterium*.²²² Moreover, the

²²¹ AM 22.2.

²²² AM 21.12.3, 13.3, 22.3.1. It is perhaps the right place here to address a 1999 article by David Woods, who theorizes that the former *dux Aegypti* Artemius was promoted to the *magisterium* by Constantius and continued in this position under Julian before his execution in late 362. Woods makes a plausible argument that may very well be correct. The *Artemii Passio* (AP 35) indicates that Artemius had authority over Egypt and Syria, which must mean he was in a position higher than only a *dux*. Furthermore, it is plausible that Ammianus remained silent on Artemius' promotion because of his anti-Christian biases. However, Woods does not adequately prove that Artemius could not have been promoted as *comes rei militaris* instead. He assumes that a *comes* would not be able to intervene in Egypt, as Artemius is said to have been able to do, but this is not exactly clear; after all, a *comes* outranked the *dux Aegypti*. Furthermore, two known *duces Aegypti*, Sebastianus and Traianus, were promoted as *comites rei militaris* before reaching the *magisterium*, indicating this was the regular career path, as will be discussed further in Chapter 3.2. Finally, without the same

Commission took place under the protection of two of the most important units in the army, the *Joviani* and the *Herculiani*, and even though the Praetorian Prefect was supposed to be the chief official, Arbitio steered the judgements.²²³ Furthermore, all the accused came from the civil bureaucracy, including even close friends and allies of Julian, such as Ursulus.²²⁴ He had helped Julian secure pay for his soldiers while he was Caesar in Gaul, and there is no indication that their relationship had soured.²²⁵ However, the eastern military officers resented Ursulus, because when he saw the ruins of Amida he bemoaned that the soldiers were paid so much it was bankrupting the treasury, yet they still did not have the spirit to defend the Empire.²²⁶ Additionally, some who had opposed Julian, like the spy Gaudentius, were never tried by the Commission.²²⁷ Thompson therefore surmises that the Commission was created to give release to the resentment of the army and to help conciliate the eastern *magistri* with Julian's new regime.²²⁸ Julian's claim that he had no knowledge of the sentences the Commission delivered could have been a lie to save his reputation, or it could support Thompson's conclusion that he either gave the army free reign so he could win their favour, or was unable to stop them doing as they pleased because he feared their power.²²⁹

Once Julian had established the short-term security of his reign, he began formulating plans to establish his long-term legitimacy. Constantius' death had enabled him to combine the western and eastern armies without significant loss of life. Such a rare concentration of force presented an excellent opportunity for a major campaign against the Persian Empire, which could rectify the territorial losses Constantius had suffered, prove to the recently incorporated eastern armies that Julian was a militarily competent emperor who deserved their support, and demonstrate the effectiveness of Julian's pagan gods.²³⁰ He spent a year-and-a-half preparing, and during this time he consolidated his position vis-à-vis the military. He dismissed a significant portion of the *protectores*, who had been responsible for several attacks on him and his supporters.²³¹ He also dismissed Agilo

supporting evidence we have used for other potential *magistri*, such as the granting of a consulship, it is my opinion that assigning a magisterial promotion to Artemius is too flimsy for this prosopographical project. Accuracy will be more beneficial than a wider breadth.

²²³ AM 22.3.1-2, 3.9.

²²⁴ Thompson 1947, 73-75.

²²⁵ AM 22.3.7.

²²⁶ AM 22.3.8.

²²⁷ Gaudentius had spied on Julian's doings while he was Caesar, and reported them to Constantius (AM 17.9.7, 21.7.2). He was only executed later (AM 22.11.1).

²²⁸ AM 22.3.8. See Thompson 1947, 75.

²²⁹ AM 22.3.8.

²³⁰ Harries 2012, 312-13.

²³¹ Lenski 2000, 504-5.

and Arbitio, and our two main sources for the period disagree on whether new *magistri* were appointed in their place before the Persian campaign. Zosimus, who wrote in Greek, cannot provide the Latin titles of the *magisterium*, but he indicates that Victor commanded infantry and therefore may have been *magister peditum*, while Hormisdas and Flavius Arinthaëus commanded cavalry and so could have been *magistri equitum*.²³² This has been generally accepted in most studies on the *magistri*.²³³ However, Ammianus does not record any new promotions, leaving only Nevitta and Jovinus as *magistri*.

A careful critique of each source can help resolve this apparent discrepancy. For this period of his work, Zosimus reproduced the now only fragmentary history of Eunapius, who in turn had used the writings of Magnus of Carrhae, an officer in Julian's army, and of Oribasius, Julian's private physician.²³⁴ On the other hand, Ammianus himself participated in the campaign and used a combination of his own memories and notes along with interviews with other participants to form his edition.²³⁵ While we have seen in the previous section that Ammianus' aversions and biases render parts of his account untrustworthy, there seems to be no display of the same favouritism for particular *magistri* in this section. All three officers in question are included in what appears to be a fair and accurate manner.²³⁶ This has led some to doubt this rendering of Zosimus' passage.²³⁷

A comparison of the tasks and duties assigned to the different officers will help to further elucidate this issue. As the army set out to invade Persia in 363, Julian split his army into multiple parts, like he had when marching against Constantius in 361. He again personally commanded the primary force in the centre, while Nevitta commanded the right flank with several legions near the banks of the Euphrates.²³⁸ The left flank of cavalry was assigned to Arinthaëus and Hormisdas, and

²³² Zos. 3.13.3. Those who follow this translation are: Demandt 1970, 581, 583; Ridley 1972, 57. Enßlin 1931, 119, believed Arinthaëus was a *magister equitum per Illyricum*.

²³³ Enßlin 1931a, 119; Demandt 1970, 581-82, 584.

²³⁴ Eun. fr. 15; Seeck 1906a, 531. Mendelsohn 1887, xxxix, first proposed the idea of Magnus of Carrhae as a source for Zosimus.

²³⁵ AM 15.1.1. See also: Thompson 1947, 20, 32-33. This has led to a number of historians insisting that if there is a clash between the two of them, Ammianus is to be preferred (Chalmers 1960, 160; Ridley 1970, 101-2; 1973, 317, 324-25).

²³⁶ He does not give Arinthaëus or Victor a single title during the campaign, and only calls Victor a *dux* (AM 24.4.13, 6.13) or *comes* (AM 24.4.31, 6.4) during the campaign, however, these titles are often used by Ammianus when referring to a confirmed *magister militum*, even for his hero Ursicinus (AM 15.5.26), so they cannot be used as evidence that Victor was not of magisterial rank. Ammianus never gives Hormisdas a Roman military title at any point. See: Woods 1997, n.57, 290.

²³⁷ Eg. Woods 1997, n.44.

²³⁸ AM 24.1.2.

a fourth part, the rear-guard, was commanded jointly by Victor and Dagalaifus. This reflects the marching order Julian established in 361, where the *magister militum* could command a section of the army alone, but lower officers were required to share command. Furthermore, Zosimus corroborates this configuration, and this would also explain his reference to Arinthaëus and Hormisdas commanding cavalry; rather than indicating they were *magistri equitum*, it suggests that they commanded the outriders covering the flank.²³⁹ Furthermore, during the various battles and sieges of the invasion, Nevitta received the more important tasks. For example, during the siege of Maiozamalcha, he oversaw the construction of a tunnel under the walls, which eventually allowed the Romans to capture the city.²⁴⁰ Conversely, Hormisdas was utilised as a negotiator and a guide because he was a Persian himself, while Victor and Arinthaëus mostly commanded scouting, raiding, and path-finding missions.²⁴¹ Thus, we can see a distinct difference in the responsibilities of Julian's senior officers which, in light of their ambiguous titulature, can help confirm the hypothesis that Nevitta was the only *magister militum* Julian had on the campaign.

After the Roman army began withdrawing from Persian territory, Julian's predilection for leading from the frontlines, a key tactic in gaining his support base, eventually proved to be his undoing when he was mortally wounded in a skirmish.²⁴² To choose a successor, the officers initially split into factions based on their past loyalties: Arinthaëus and Victor led the faction that had served in the east, while Nevitta and Dagalaifus headed those from the west.²⁴³ Arinthaëus and Victor were also both Christians whereas Nevitta's and Dagalaifus' religions are unrecorded, but on the basis of the prosopographical analysis conducted later in this thesis, there is the chance that they were both pagans, which suggests that preference for a Christian or pagan emperor may also have played into the division.²⁴⁴ It is interesting to note that no individual, even the senior officer Nevitta, was able to assert themselves to make a unilateral decision, a development which will be seen later in the fourth century. Each faction sought a candidate from their own group, but they ultimately compromised and agreed upon raising Saturninus Salutius Secundus, the Praetorian

²³⁹ Zos. 3.14.1.

²⁴⁰ AM 24.4.1-13, 4.22-25; Zos. 3.21.4. Zos. 3.22.1 says that Julian replaced those who were in charge of the mines because of their laziness, but this could be a reference to the sappers themselves and not Nevitta and Dagalaifus.

²⁴¹ Hormisdas: AM 24.1.8, 2.20; 24.2.4; Zos. 3.15.4-6, and also probably 3.29.2-4. Victor: AM 24.4.13, 4.31, 6.4-7; Zos. 3.16.3-17.1, 21.5, cf. 25.1-7. Arinthaëus: AM 24.7.2; Zos. 3.24.1.

²⁴² AM 25.3.23, 5.1; Soc. 2.21.17; *Cons. Const.* s.a. 362; Eutr. 10.16.2; Zos. 3.29.1; *Epit.* 43.4.

²⁴³ AM 25.5.2.

²⁴⁴ All were also barbarians: Waas 1971, 12. For a discussion of the religious beliefs of the *magistri*, see Chapter 3.1.

Prefect. However, he declined on account of his old age. Before they could arrange another candidate, a group of soldiers, discontent with being marooned deep in the enemy's territory without a leader, raised a *domesticorum ordinis primus* by the name of Jovian as emperor.²⁴⁵ These soldiers have been identified by Noel Lenski as a group of Christian imperial guardsmen who had been marginalised under Julian, and this helps explain why they raised Jovian, a man of small repute but a fellow Christian and guard.²⁴⁶ The opportunity to arrange a favourable candidate was thus taken away from the *magistri* by a disaffected group in the military.

Jovian's reign was brief but chaotic. He had Salutius and Arinthaëus negotiate peace with the Persians, and Shapur allowed the Roman army to retreat unharmed in exchange for a large territorial concession, the removal of all Roman influence in Armenia and Iberia, and a thirty-year truce.²⁴⁷ Because the support of the soldiers alone was not enough to safeguard his reign in the long-term, Jovian needed to quickly secure the backing of the upper echelons of the military and civil bureaucracy, including the *magistri militum*. He promoted Victor and Dagalaifus, one general from each of the opposing succession factions, as *magistri equitum*.²⁴⁸ Shortly after, he requested that his father-in-law, Lucillianus (the same man who had surrendered to Julian) come out of retirement and take up the position of *magister equitum et peditum* in Italy.²⁴⁹

Nevitta disappears from the sources after Jovian became emperor.²⁵⁰ It is possible he died or retired, although neither Ammianus nor Zosimus specify this.²⁵¹ A more likely explanation might be that Jovian had him removed, because he attempted to do the same to Julian's other incumbent *magister*, Jovinus. He was still in Gaul, and Jovian feared that he could use his influence with the soldiers to usurp power, so he chose to replace him with the retired *tribunus* Malarichus. Malarichus is said to have been a man of few prospects, so Jovian thought that he could easily

²⁴⁵ AM 25.5.4. Zos. 3.30.1 gives a different account of events, one that states Jovian was chosen by the succession council's common consent, although Lenski 2000, 495-96 lays out the reason we should not believe this account over Ammianus'.

²⁴⁶ AM 25.5.4; Lenski 2000. The church histories tell that Jovian was a reluctant emperor until the army professed itself Christian (Theod. *HE* 4.1; Soc. 3.22; Soz. 6.1.1).

²⁴⁷ The sources mostly agree that Shapur initiated negotiations: AM 25.7.5-13; Zos. 3.31.1; Lib. *Or.* 18.277-9; Theod. *HE* 4.2.2; Ruf. *HE* 11.1; *contra* Festus 29; Tabari, I 843. Also see: *Julian Romance*, 220.17-24, 224.22-225.1.

²⁴⁸ AM 26.5.2. On Victor's title, see: AM 27.5.1. On Dagalaifus' title, see: AM 26.1.6.

²⁴⁹ AM 25.8.9-10.

²⁵⁰ Demandt 1970, 585.

²⁵¹ Cf. Waas 1971, 13.

secure his loyalty by suddenly raising him up.²⁵² Malarichus, however, bluntly refused the offer. This is the only known time this occurred in the fourth century.

In Milan, Lucillianus learned that Malarichus had turned his promotion down, so he forwent his appointment in Italy and travelled to Rheims to take command of the Gallic legions instead. Ammianus criticises him because he did not secure the province nor win the loyalty of the soldiers but instead chose to immediately put an administrative official on trial for corruption.²⁵³ This official fled to the army camp and told the soldiers that Julian was still alive and Jovian was only a usurper, which incited the garrison to riot and kill Lucillianus.²⁵⁴ Jovinus, who must have remained in Gaul even though he had been dismissed, managed to calm the soldiers and convince the garrison to support Jovian.²⁵⁵ In return, Jovian reaffirmed him as *magister equitum* in Gaul.²⁵⁶ Jovian's final appointment was to make Lupicinus *magister equitum* in the east, and then he would die in early 364.²⁵⁷

The brief if well-documented reigns of Julian and Jovian as sole emperors are important for our understanding of the office of *magister militum*. Most significantly, we can contrast the actions taken during the planning of a major military campaign and those taken after a military disaster. When preparing for the invasion of Persia, Julian reduced the number of *magistri* by dismissing those who had served under Constantius and perhaps had questionable loyalties. It seems he did not replace them, and only took a single *magister militum* with him on campaign, leaving another to oversee Gaul. Julian had pacified the Rhine frontier, Constantius had pacified the Danube, and the Persians were soon to be preoccupied with his invasion, so he must have felt confident that the Empire was secure. Furthermore, as Julian was a militarily proven and capable emperor, he was able to keep the *magistri* in line and obedient, something later emperors would struggle with. Conversely, when Jovian inherited the Empire, he was in a vastly inferior position. The great invasion force was exhausted and hungry after marching through Persian farmland scoured of food by saboteurs, and they were being whittled down by the constant raiding of Persian cavalry.²⁵⁸

²⁵² AM 25.8.11, 10.6.

²⁵³ AM 25.10.7.

²⁵⁴ AM 25.10.7.

²⁵⁵ AM 25.10.8.

²⁵⁶ Arinthaëus carried this message to him (AM 25.10.9-10). For his title, see: *CTh* 7.1.7, 8.1.10.

²⁵⁷ AM 26.5.2. Jovian also gave a promotion to both Victor and Arinthaëus but Ammianus does not define the rank they were promoted to until they were serving under Valens (AM 27.5.1-9). On Jovian's death: AM 25.10.13; Soc. 3.26.5, 4.1.1; Eutr. 10.18.2; Jer. *Chron.* s.a. 364; *Epit.* 4.44; Zos. 3.35.3; Theod. *HE* 4.5.

²⁵⁸ AM 25.1.1-19, 2.1, 3.1-14.

Moreover, the stability that Julian had established was not guaranteed to survive a change of regime and dynasty. In this context, we can understand Jovian's rapid removal of the two incumbent *magistri* and the promotion of five new generals as an attempt to secure short-term stability during a crisis, a phenomenon will be repeated over the remainder of the century.

In totality, the emperors generally ensured the *magistri militum* continued to be useful tools for furthering their plans and policies during the first decades in which we can identify these generals. The *magistri* were given varied tasks, including religious duties, the suppression of rebellions, and command during campaigns and battles. While Vetranio and Silvanus both attempted to become emperors, neither of them was successful. Other *magistri*, like Arbitio, were able to use their powerful positions to advise and influence the emperors, yet were unable to seriously exert their will on major events. At the same time, however, the *magistri* began to explore new avenues for wielding power. It was realised that imperial succession crises offered the opportunity to promote an emperor that would be favourable to their interests, although the *magistri* failed to fully exploit the chance after the death of Julian. This was a chance not lost on future *magistri*, and we will see in the following section that they became increasingly capable of furthering their own interests. Thus, while the early *magistri* were powerful, they were still inhibited and overshadowed by the emperors, and they would need to refine their approach to events if they were to reach the full potential of their position.

Chapter Two: The *Magistri Militum* from 364 to 395 CE

The selection of Jovian's successor in February 364 was a more controlled affair than Jovian's own election. The soldiers were now safely back within Roman territory, so they did not feel the same level of urgency that caused them to elect their own emperor eight months prior – although they would not be content to wait too long, so the officials in command began looking for a successor. Neither Ammianus nor Zosimus state clearly who formed the search group, although Ammianus does write that the highest civil and military leaders were involved.²⁵⁹ Dagalaifus was also at least in the vicinity, and the candidates that were considered came from the army, so we can be confident that military officers were likely the most prominent searchers.²⁶⁰

The candidates they considered are important for understanding the manner in which the imperial office was envisioned. Flavius Aequitius, *tribunus* of the prestigious *scholae primae Scutariorum*, was considered first, but he was then rejected for being too rustic and unrefined.²⁶¹ They may have offered the succession once more to Salutius, but he again declined.²⁶² They next considered Januarius, a relative of Jovian and an officer in Illyricum, but he was rejected for being too far away.²⁶³ Zosimus records the candidacy was also offered to Salutius' son, but Salutius declined on account of the boy's youth; unfortunately, we do not know his exact age.²⁶⁴ Furthermore, as far as the sources indicate, none of the officials considered Jovian's infant son to be a viable successor at the time. Nonetheless, it was clearly feared that his connection to an imperial dynasty might allow him to threaten the chosen emperor in the future, because he was cruelly

²⁵⁹ AM 26.1.3.

²⁶⁰ cf. Waas 1971, 13, who also believes Arinthaëus was involved, although AM 25.10.9 indicates he was in Gaul.

²⁶¹ AM 26.1.4.

²⁶² Zos. 3.36.1-2; Zon. 13.14. See: Lenski 2002, 20 n.43.

²⁶³ There is some possibility that Januarius was a *magister militum* at this time, however this is unlikely because in this period Ammianus is detailed with the titulature but does not give Januarius a magisterial rank, nor does Januarius participate in any campaigns, battles, or other events to warrant assigning that rank to him. See: Demand 1970, 586; *PLRE*, 454.

²⁶⁴ Zos. 3.36.1-2. Although we do not know the son's age, if his father declined on his behalf, he was presumably quite young.

blinded to eliminate any succession possibility.²⁶⁵ They finally chose Flavius Valentinian, *tribunus* of the *scholae secundam Scutariorum*.²⁶⁶ Thus, we can determine the sought after qualities in a new emperor: sufficiently cultured, nearby, willing to accept, and although they considered a youth, the other candidates had extensive military experience.

It took Valentinian ten days to reach the main army and be officially accepted by the soldiers as emperor.²⁶⁷ During the intervening period, some of Valentinian's supporters calmed the army and convinced them to not resist his election or look for their own candidate.²⁶⁸ The soldiers only demanded that Valentinian appoint a co-emperor, so if he died they would not be left without a sovereign.²⁶⁹ Valentinian sought advice on who to appoint, but only the *magister equitum* Dagalaifus was bold enough to tell him that if he loves his family, he should promote his brother, Flavius Valens, but if he loves the Empire, he should find someone else. Valentinian must have felt he needed a trustworthy and reliable, albeit untested co-emperor, because despite the warning of his commander, he soon raised Valens.²⁷⁰ This smoothly settled the second imperial succession crisis of our period, and ushered in a new regime that would see drastic changes in regards to the office of *magister militum*.

Valentinian, as both the elder and the first appointed, was the senior Augustus, and so he chose to assign the east to Valens and take the western Empire for himself. This seniority also affected the *magistri*: many of Valentinian's generals were named in laws created when the two emperors were together, yet none of Valens' generals were so named.²⁷¹ They divided the army between them, and so Jovinus and Dagalaifus returned to the west with Valentinian, while Valens took Lupicinus and Victor to the east.²⁷² All four of these men were *magistri equitum*.²⁷³ This division indicates that experience was considered: Dagalaifus and Victor had been recently

²⁶⁵ Lenski 2002, 20.

²⁶⁶ AM 26.1.5.

²⁶⁷ AM 26.2.2; Zos. 3.36.2-3; *Epit.* 45.3; Oros. 7.32.1; Jord. *Rom.* 307; Theod. *HE* 4.6; Soz. 6.6; Soc. 4.1; Eun. fr. 31; *Cons. Const.* s.a. 364.

²⁶⁸ AM 26.1.6.

²⁶⁹ Zos. 4.1.2; Soz. 6.6.9. AM 26.4.3, Soc. 4.1, Theod. *HE* 4.5 imply that Valentinian made the decision independently.

²⁷⁰ AM 26.4.1-2.

²⁷¹ Demandt 1970, 709.

²⁷² AM 26.5.1-3; Lee 2008, 222.

²⁷³ Jovinus: *CTh* 8.1.10; cf. *CTh* 7.1.7. Lupicinus: AM 26.5.2. Victor: AM 27.5.1. The *PLRE* suggests that Dagalaifus was perhaps in fact a *magister peditum*, as his successor, Severus, was given that title. However, AM 26.1.6 calls him *magister equitum*.

appointed to magisterial rank, but Lupicinus and Jovinus had been *magistri* since 359 and 360, respectively, so the east and the west both had a seasoned veteran and a new appointee. It also meant that all of Jovian's *magistri* kept their positions, a stark difference to both Julian's and Jovian's treatment of their predecessors' generals.

2.1 Valentinian's Western Empire

The reign of emperor Valentinian in the western Roman Empire was a watershed for the *magistri militum*. Valentinian significantly increased the numbers of consulships awarded to the *magistri*.²⁷⁴ He also officially raised their legal status to be equal to that of the highest civil officials, the Praetorian and Urban Prefects. Additionally, Meaghan McEvoy argues that when Valentinian raised Gratian, his eight-year old son, to the position of co-emperor in 367, it set an important precedent for the future of the imperial office.²⁷⁵ While there had been young emperors in the past, most had already attained the *toga virilis*, and they were often only made a Caesar.²⁷⁶ The fact that Gratian was instead made a co-Augustus legitimised the viability of child-emperors, which provided the *magister militum* Merobaudes with an acceptable model he could use to promote a child-emperor for his own benefit in 375. The phenomenon of child-emperors incapable of commanding the armies left a great deal of power in the hands of the senior *magistri militum*. All these factors combined to expand the power of the *magistri* to unprecedented levels. This section will track these developments as they occurred, as well as cast light on some of the questions that have persisted about Valentinian's *magistri*.

After splitting the army with Valens in 364, Valentinian travelled first to Italy and then into Gaul.²⁷⁷ Jovinus and Dagalaifus were initially his only two *magistri*. In the following section, more will be explained about the usurpation of Procopius in Constantinople, but it is important to see here how it prompted Valentinian to create another *magister*. When Valentinian heard of the rebellion, he decided that he could not personally go and help his brother, so instead he promoted the *comes per Illyricum*, Flavius Aequitius, to the *magisterium*.²⁷⁸ While we do not know of any specific increases in official prerogatives or powers which came with such a promotion, Valentinian must have had some motivating reason for doing so. Hence, most likely explanations seem to be that it actually did increase the resources Aequitius could draw upon, or perhaps Valentinian hoped

²⁷⁴ In 366 Dagalaifus was the first to receive a consulship that ushered in his retirement: *CTh* 11.1.13, 4.12.6; *CIL* 5.8606, 10.4487, 11.4328, 14.1945; *P Flor.* 1 84.1; AM 26.9.1; Bagnall, et al. 1987, 266-67; *contra* Demandt 1970, 591.

²⁷⁵ McEvoy 2013, 48-70.

²⁷⁶ McEvoy 2013, 3-13.

²⁷⁷ His journey can be tracked through the laws issued during this time: Seeck 1919, 216, 218; Lenski 2002, 27.

²⁷⁸ AM 26.5.8-9. Aequitius as a *comes per Illyricum*: AM 26.5.3. As *magister militum*: *CTh* 7.1.8; AM 26.5.11, 7.11.

the greater remuneration and honour of the higher position would ensure Aequitius' continued loyalty.

The titles Ammianus assigns to an officer named Severus present some difficulties.²⁷⁹ Whilst in Milan in 365, Severus was Valentinian's *comes domesticorum*.²⁸⁰ He was also present when Valentinian fell extremely ill in Amiens in 367. In the event that the emperor's sickness proved fatal, the bureaucrats looked for a potential successor. The Gallic faction at court looked to Sextius Rusticus Julianus, the *magister memoriae*, while others looked to Severus, who Ammianus writes was "at that time *magister peditum*".²⁸¹ As will be detailed in Chapter Three, the *comes domesticorum* was one step below *magister militum*, and Severus' promotion upwards was typical. Valentinian eventually recovered, and then in order to both placate his officials and safeguard his dynasty in the event of his death, he promoted the eight-year old Gratian as co-Augustus.²⁸² According to Ammianus, Valentinian then received a report that Britain and the Channel coast had come under a massive coordinated attack by the Picts, Attacotti, Scots, Franks, and Saxons.²⁸³ Valentinian's first response was to send Severus to stem the attacks, and Ammianus states that he was "still *comes domesticorum*".²⁸⁴ This would seem to describe an unprecedented demotion. This was never reported for any other *magister*, and it is made more implausible by the fact that Ammianus again records Severus as a *magister militum* by 368.²⁸⁵

This apparent contradiction has been resolved by rearranging Ammianus' chronology to have Severus sent to Britain as *comes domesticorum*, then return and promoted to the *magisterium* all before Valentinian fell ill.²⁸⁶ Walter Heering pointed out that, because Valentinian's primary focus during this period was the Alemanni across the Rhine, the only reason he would travel away from them and towards Amiens is because it was along the most direct route to Boulogne, the

²⁷⁹ See note 181. This is Severus 10.

²⁸⁰ *CTh* 6.24.2, 6.24.3. The MSS record 364, Seeck 1919, 71, argues they cannot have been issued until 365.

²⁸¹ *AM* 27.6.3. We are not told explicitly who supported Severus, but if it was not the Gallic military faction then it was possibly a senatorial group.

²⁸² *AM* 27.6.10-11; *Symm. Or.* 1.3, 2.31-2, 3.1-6; *Soz.* 6.10.1; *Soc.* 4.11.3; *Epit.* 45.4; *Zos.* 4.12.2; *Jer. Chron.* s.a. 367; *Prosp. Tiro* s.a. 384; *Philost. HE* 8.8; *Theoph. AM* 5857; *Zon.* 13.15; *Cons. Const.* s.a. 364; McEvoy 2013, 48-54.

²⁸³ *AM* 27.8.1, 8.5.

²⁸⁴ *AM* 27.8.2.

²⁸⁵ *AM* 27.10.6.

²⁸⁶ Seeck 1906b, 274-75; cf. 1906a 519-20; Heering 1927, 70; Enßlin 1931a, 124.

largest port through which one would cross to Britain.²⁸⁷ Therefore, the raiding and Severus' mission probably began before he arrived there and fell ill.

While this theory resolves Ammianus' confused chronology, a question that has so far not received an adequate answer is why Valentinian first sent Severus to deal with the crisis, and then soon replaced him with Jovinus, who was in turn quickly replaced by the officer Flavius Theodosius.²⁸⁸ Explanations by Demandt and Tomlin have remained unsatisfactory.²⁸⁹ A possible answer lies in remembering that Jovinus had not spent the winter in Rheims with Valentinian, but had returned to Paris with the large campaign army with which he had fought the Alemanni the previous year.²⁹⁰ Paris and Rheims are both separated from Amiens by around 100 miles of road. After Valentinian received word of attacks on Britain and northern Gaul, he must have sent word to Paris for Jovinus to bring his army and join him in Amiens. After mobilising the soldiers and gathering the necessary supplies, a Roman army could cross such distance in a few days, but the quicker the response, the more Roman citizens in Britain could be safeguarded. Thus, Valentinian seems to have sent *comes domesticorum* Severus, the highest-ranking officer in Rheims, ahead with a small rapid force to avert the trouble besetting Britain "if chance should allow the desired opportunity".²⁹¹ This implies that Valentinian only sent Severus to do what was possible quickly, and once both he and Jovinus had "shortly after" arrived in Amiens, Severus was recalled and Jovinus sent out with a more substantial force.²⁹² Upon his return, having fulfilled his mission, Severus received a promotion to the *magisterium*.

The description of Jovinus' mission in Britain is unfortunately hampered by a lacuna in Ammianus' text, but it appears that he quickly reported that the situation was even worse than

²⁸⁷ Heering 1927, 51. Tomlin 1974, 306 added that Ammianus' mistake may have resulted from the second-hand information he was forced to rely upon from his residence in Antioch, which has been followed by Blockley 1980; Frere 1987, 340; Drinkwater 2007, 269; Alvarez-Jimenez 2013

²⁸⁸ AM 27.8.2-3.

²⁸⁹ Demandt 1970, 562; 1972, 95-96; Tomlin 1974, 305 n.19.

²⁹⁰ AM 27.2.10; *contra* Tomlin 1974, n.10, who has been followed by others, including Drinkwater 2007, 269. We must remember that it had become common for the emperor to hold court in one city while a *magister militum* commanded a second army somewhere else. Such was the practice under Julian from 355 to 360, while Constantius and later Gratian would go even further, residing in Italy and leaving the Gallic armies to *magistri*. Valentinian seems to have done the same when he brought his army from Milan to Paris with Dagalaifus while Jovinus commanded the army at Rheims. Therefore, we can be confident that Valentinian went to Rheims and Jovinus to Paris.

²⁹¹ AM 27.8.2.

²⁹² AM 27.8.2. The idea that Severus was sent to the area to reconnoitre the situation and report back to Valentinian has persisted in the English literature, i.e. Tomlin 1974, 305, when in reality AM 27.8.2 writes that he was sent there to redress the situation and was then recalled back.

Valentinian thought, and more soldiers were needed.²⁹³ This would explain why Valentinian then sent four senior units of the field army under the command of Flavius Theodosius, who was probably a *comes rei militaris* or similar, to take over from Jovinus.²⁹⁴ It seems somewhat contradictory that Valentinian would recall the *magister militum* and replace him with only a *comes* when the situation was increasingly dire, but Valentinian was probably looking ahead to a campaign against the Alemanni, the enemies of “the entire Roman world”, and he must have wanted his most senior commanders with him.²⁹⁵ By then, it was too late in the campaign season to begin a new push against the Alemanni, so Valentinian moved to Trier, close to the Rhine, to prepare for the following year.

It was at this time that Valentinian increased the official status of the *magistri militum* by placing them on equal standing to the Praetorian and Urban Prefects.²⁹⁶ This was done as part of a wider reformation of the governmental hierarchy.²⁹⁷ Valentinian also specified that, upon retirement, precedence was to be given to those who had served the longest. The additional privileges included being able to consult with judges first, and they were given more distinguished and prominent seats in the Senate, although it was specified that the traditional order was still to be observed. Thus, it does not seem that this change directly increased the influence or power of the *magisteri*, but it is nevertheless an important acknowledgment of the *magistri*'s influence in Valentinian's government.

In 374 the Quadi and Sarmatians invaded across the upper Danube river.²⁹⁸ After they found some initial successes, the Sarmatians were driven back across the river, and then Valentinian arrived in early 375 to finish off the Quadi.²⁹⁹ Aequitius' failures, including procrastination on a building project and a shameful retreat from the Quadi, did not endear him to Valentinian, who removed him from active command.³⁰⁰ Valentinian instead promoted Merobaudes, an experienced

²⁹³ AM 27.8.2.

²⁹⁴ Tomlin 1974, 303 n.6, 306 n.26.

²⁹⁵ AM 26.5.13.

²⁹⁶ *CTh* 6.7.1-2. *Cth* 6.22.4 also specifies that the *magistri* outranked those who had achieved a proconsulate. The law, however, only specifies *magistri equitum*, and the wording of the law has caused some debate. See: Demandt 1970, 595.

²⁹⁷ Some of the other laws include *CTh* 6.9.1, 14.1, 22.4. It is also reaffirmed by Gratian in 384 (*CTh* 6.5.2). Also see: Jones 1964, 142-43; Näf 1995, 20; Heather 1998, 188-91.

²⁹⁸ This was prompted by an aggressive fortification-building project: AM 29.6.1 ff.

²⁹⁹ AM 29.6.12-16; 30.5.1; Drinkwater 2007, 284-85.

³⁰⁰ AM 29.6.3, 6.12.

soldier who had served as an officer since at least Julian's Persian campaign.³⁰¹ Along with the *comes* Sebastianus, Merobaudes took an expeditionary force into Quadi territory to destroy their villages while Valentinian unsuccessfully sought to bring their main forces to a decisive battle.³⁰² After the armies had returned to their winter garrisons, the Quadi sent envoys to Valentinian's residence in the city of Brigetio to negotiate a truce.³⁰³ At this fateful meeting the Quadi envoys tried to justify their invasion and make demands of Valentinian, and this angered him so greatly that he burst a blood vessel and fatally haemorrhaged on 17 November 375.³⁰⁴

Valentinian's death created the third imperial succession crisis in a little over a decade, and while the circumstances were not entirely unique, it was resolved with the new solution of a figurehead emperor. Of the officials in Brigetio, Aequitius and Petronius Probus, the Praetorian Prefect, were the most active in finding a successor.³⁰⁵ Whether they thought either of themselves to be possible candidates is unclear, but it mattered little while Merobaudes commanded the army at nearby Aquincum, because any emperor not supported by the army would be easily overthrown. Working with the *magister militum* was therefore necessary.³⁰⁶ Acting as if Valentinian were still alive, Aequitius and Probus summoned Merobaudes, but somehow he uncovered the truth of what had transpired, and he immediately began preparing.³⁰⁷

Merobaudes had been present at Jovian's election, and he may have also been present at Valentinian's.³⁰⁸ He thus had a good understanding that time was of the essence if he were to control the promotion of the next emperor. Although the army was not in hostile enemy territory like it had been in 363, the situation was still precarious. The Quadi had sued for peace, but the fact that they had still tried to make demands of Valentinian indicates that they had not been annihilated. Zosimus records that it was feared they would seize the opportunity to attack, and

³⁰¹ Philost. *HE* 8.1. Zos. 4.17.1 says that Merobaudes was in charge of the entire army, but this could only mean he was the supreme general of Valentinian's main *comitatus*. At this point, he is most likely a *magister peditum*, but the evidence is not specific. AM 30.5.13 says he is in command of "militari peditum" and he replaces Aequitius, who was an undefined *magister militum*.

³⁰² AM 30.5.13. Sebastianus had fought with Valentinian previously (AM 27.10.6-11).

³⁰³ AM 30.6.

³⁰⁴ AM 30.6.3-6; Soc. 4.31; Zos 4.17.1-2; McEvoy 2013, 54.

³⁰⁵ Aequitius: Zos. 4.19.1-2; *Epit* 46.10. Rolfe 1939, 349, identifies this Aequitius with another man who was later a *cura palatii* under Valens, but a transferal like this seems unlikely. Probus: Ruf. *HE* 11.12; AM 30.5.10. Philost. *HE* 9.16 also adds in Justina, Valentinian's wife.

³⁰⁶ AM 30.5.14.

³⁰⁷ AM 30.6.2-4, 10.2-3; Zos. 4.19.1; *Epit*. 46.10.

³⁰⁸ Philost. *HE* 8.1.

Ammianus corroborates this by writing that Merobaudes destroyed the bridge across the Danube in order to delay any Quadi incursions.³⁰⁹ Because of the potential of a Quadi attack, the soldiery could not be relied on to remain without imperial guidance for long. Unfortunately, Valens was preoccupied and far too distant on the eastern frontier to take command, and Gratian also could not arrive quickly while winter made communication and travel prohibitively slow. Thus, a successor had to be found from nearby, and quickly.

There were two less immediate, but just as important, concerns for Merobaudes. From his previous experience, he would have been aware that Julian's favourite *magister*, Nevitta, had been sidelined by Jovian. To avoid this occurring to him, one of his first actions was to send Sebastianus away to a distant post.³¹⁰ Ammianus writes that Sebastianus was not an ambitious man, implying he would not seek to be emperor himself, but he was experienced and popular, which meant he was a likely candidate for the army to raise on their own.³¹¹ In my view, this indicates that Merobaudes was not willing to hand the position to another military man who could potentially exclude him from power. The other consideration was finding someone that did not threaten Gratian's and Valens' dynasty, because such a successor would risk civil war.³¹²

To find a candidate that suited all his needs, Merobaudes went to Brigetio and joined Aequitius and Probus. Despite being the most powerful man present, Merobaudes did not seek to elect himself. It may have been his Frankish heritage that precluded him from becoming emperor, or the fact that he did not belong to the prevailing dynasty.³¹³ Potentially, Merobaudes also knew of the failures of Vetrano and Silvanus, and decided that it was a safer path to remain a *magister militum* and instead promote someone who would follow his orders and see to his interests. Whatever the exact reasons, Merobaudes and the other officials chose Valentinianus, the late-emperor's four-year old son and Gratian's half-brother.³¹⁴ He seemed to be a good choice for many reasons. As a member of the royal family, he did not threaten the existing dynasty, and his youth ensured he would surpass neither Gratian's nor Valens' seniority. He had been living only one-

³⁰⁹ Zos. 4.19.1; AM 31.10.2.

³¹⁰ Probably Italy: AM 31.11.1; Zos. 4.22.4; Errington 1996a, 441-43.

³¹¹ AM 30.10.3. Eun. fr. 44.3 also praises Sebastianus' virtues and describes the reason he was so popular with the soldiers.

³¹² AM 30.10.1.

³¹³ Merobaudes' ethnic and cultural background is not explicitly recorded in the evidence, but his name implies a Germanic, probably Frankish, origin (Schönfeld 1911, 167). For a discussion on the prohibition of barbarians becoming emperors, see pages 126-28.

³¹⁴ McEvoy 2013, 56.

hundred miles away in the city of Murocinctam, so it was possible for him to be summoned and raised with rapidity. Additionally, those raising him knew he could be used as leverage to improve their position vis-à-vis Gratian's court.³¹⁵ Therefore he was raised with all the usual ceremony as emperor Valentinian II on 22 November 375, only five days after the death of his father.³¹⁶

This election shows us that some of the requisites for imperial office had changed between the elections of Valentinian I and II. Rapidity remained crucial, and the boy's youth precluded the need to consider his willingness. The key difference was maturity. In 364, candidates had needed to be cultured and experienced. No one had considered Jovian's infant son, and although rulership had been offered to the son of Salutius Secundus, the Prefect had declined on his behalf, apparently not believing he could be an effective ruler. However, the eight-year old Gratian had been promoted to the position of full Augustus in 367. This set an acceptable precedent for promoting an untried and inexperienced boy, and Merobaudes was very willing to take advantage of this to increase his own power.³¹⁷

A period of complex political manoeuvring followed Valentinian II's accession as the various power blocs in the west competed for primacy, and these struggles seemingly brought down the *magister* Flavius Theodosius, who had been suppressing Firmus' revolt in modern Algeria since 373.³¹⁸ In 375, rather than be turned over to Flavius Theodosius, Firmus committed suicide while in the custody of one of the tribes allied with Rome.³¹⁹ This successfully concluded the campaign, but Flavius Theodosius would soon be executed in mysterious circumstances. We only know of his death from four rather unsatisfactory sources.³²⁰ Jerome and Jordanes imply Flavius Theodosius was killed along with a large number of other aristocrats, although Jordanes blames a new religious law enacted by Valens.³²¹ Ambrose writes that his death resulted from schemes and plots, and

³¹⁵ McEvoy 2013, 59; McLynn 1994, 84.

³¹⁶ AM 30.10.4-5; *Cons. Const.* 375; *Soc.* 4.31.7; *Soz.* 6.36.5; *Amb. De ob. Val. Iun.* 59; *Epit.* 45.10; *Zos.* 4.19.1; *Philost. HE* 9.16; *Ruf. HE* 11.12; cf. *Aus. Grat. Act.* 2.7, 10.48; Hebblewhite 2017, 149.

³¹⁷ McEvoy 2013, 55.

³¹⁸ Demandt 1972, 101. For the political competitions of this period, see: McEvoy 2013, 58-60; Potter 2004, 544-45; Matthews 1975, 64-66.

³¹⁹ AM 29.5.54.

³²⁰ Because he was writing his history during the tenure of emperor Theodosius, Ammianus chose not to preserve the story of the father's downfall for fear of embarrassing the emperor. For further explanation, see: Barnes 1998, 184; Demandt 1969, 599. Ammianus also wrote of Flavius Theodosius in highly favourable terms, comparing him to Domitius Corbulo, just as he did with his hero, Ursicinus: AM 29.5.4.

³²¹ *Jer. Chron. s.a.* 376; *Jord. Rom.* 312; Demandt 1969, 602.

Orosius records that whoever killed him was jealous of his successes.³²² While it seems clear that Flavius Theodosius' death was orchestrated by a rival, the perpetrators remain unknown. It has been theorised that Merobaudes was responsible, but this is unlikely due to his later congenial relationship with emperor Theodosius, the homonymous son of the *magister militum*, who probably would have rather sought revenge if it was suspected Merobaudes was behind the death of his father.³²³ More likely perpetrators are the enemies Flavius Theodosius had made in the civil sector through his anticorruption measures in Britain and Africa, including Maximinus, the Praetorian Prefect of Gaul, who would himself be executed in 376.³²⁴

In conclusion, Valentinian I was a militarily successful emperor under whom several significant campaigns were fought by the *magistri*. As a military man, Valentinian was an ardent promoter of the military and its *magistri*, which helped to ensure strength in the western provinces. He willingly gave his *magistri* greater powers and flexibility, including overseeing increasingly independent operations in Britain, Africa, and along the Danube. His personal vigour and dynamism on campaign, despite his illnesses, managed to ensure the powerful men in his government worked in his interest, but his unexpected death left the western Empire in dire straits. Even though Valentinian had raised Gratian as an Augustus, he had kept the young emperor on the sidelines, and he had not yet been tested in war. Thus, it was unknown how competent of an independent emperor he might be. In this succession crisis, the *magister militum* Merobaudes emerged as a capable and ambitious individual. Lessons imparted from the previous successions taught him that rapidity was essential, and he quickly removed potential rivals. He then leveraged the power of the army to his advantage and formed an alliance with the civil officials to raise Valentinian II as an imperial candidate that would be acceptable to both the soldiers and the other emperors. Conversely, Flavius Theodosius could not gain the same advantages, despite having an army at his disposal. His distance from affairs meant he would have only received the news of Valentinian II's accession well after it happened. Furthermore, rather than alliances, his anticorruption reforms had made him enemies with the civil officials, limiting his ability to challenge Merobaudes and probably costing him his life.

³²² Amb. *De ob. Theod.* 53; Oros. 7.33.7.

³²³ For those that suspect Merobaudes, see: Tomlin 1973, 527-28; McEvoy 2013, 57; Errington 1996a, 444. For the arguments against Merobaudes' involvement, see: Rodgers 1981, 82, 89; Demandt 1969.

³²⁴ Potter 2004, 544-45; Rodgers 1981, 83-84.

The raising of Valentinian II by Merobaudes and his alliance shows that they were re-envisioning what it meant to be emperor, as well as what it meant to be a powerful official or general. Merobaudes realised that he no longer had to only serve the emperors and receive what benefits he was given, but he now had the very real chance to use the office of emperor to further his own interests. However, it seems Merobaudes did not see Valentinian II as a permanent source of power. Whether he initially thought his place would remain with the child-emperor is unclear, but he would soon be found in Gratian's court as the west's sole *magister militum* while Valentinian was kept on the margins.

2.2 Valens' Eastern Empire

Emperor Valens lacked the proficiency his brother had in military matters, and he was personally indecisive and inadequate in military operations. These problems stemmed from his lack of military experience. He had been a member of Jovian's army from roughly 359 as a *protector domesticus*, but there is no evidence he did anything of note during this time.³²⁵ Valentinian promoted Valens to the position of *tribunus stabuli* shortly before raising him as emperor, although this position was only in charge of obtaining horses for the army.³²⁶ While important, it did not allow Valens to gain any command experience. Consequently, he was unfamiliar with campaigns and battles, and so it was necessary for him to rely heavily on his *magistri*, and he almost always kept them attached to his main army. Thus, wherever the emperor was present would be adequately protected, but other frontiers were at risk of mismanagement. This was a cause for significant instability in Valens' half of the Empire, and it was an important factor that led to his eventual death at the Battle of Adrianople.

Because Valens' first priority was securing the Persian frontier, he left Valentinian I at Naissus and passed through Constantinople to go to the east.³²⁷ He was, however, forced to turn around when Procopius, a former officer in Julian's army who claimed he had been designated as heir, rebelled and claimed the purple in Constantinople.³²⁸ Procopius quickly recruited Gomoarius and Agilo, former *magistri* under Constantius, to lead his armies, while Arbitio instead joined Valens.³²⁹ The usurper was eventually defeated after Gomoarius and Agilo both defected with their soldiers.³³⁰ Valens made Lupicinus consul in 367 as a reward for his service, and with this award he retired from the military.³³¹ Arbitio is not heard of again, so he presumably returned to retirement.

³²⁵ Soc. 3.13.3-4, 4.1.8; Joh. Ant. fr. 179; Lenski 2002, 52-54.

³²⁶ AM 26.4.2; Jones 1964, 372-73. For how this position fit into the military hierarchy, see Chapter Three.

³²⁷ AM 26.6.11; Zos. 4.4.1, 13.1-2; Soc. 4.2.4; Philost. *HE* 9.5; *CTh* 7.22.7; Lib. *Ep.* 1499, 1505. Soc. 4.2.6-3.1, 5.2 and Soz. 6.7.10-8.2 even state that Valens himself was in Antioch when he heard of Procopius' revolt, but he was most likely still in Cappadocia as AM 26.7.2 reports.

³²⁸ AM 23.3.3, 26.6.2-3, 6.12; *Cons. Const.* s.a. 365; Them. *Or.* 7.91a; Zos. 4.4.2-3, 5.5, 6.3; Lib. *Or.* 19.15; Soc. 4.3.1; Lenski 2002, 68-73.

³²⁹ AM 23.3.2, 26.7.4, 9.4

³³⁰ AM 26.9.6-9; Zos. 4.7.4-8.4; Them. *Or.* 7.87b; *Cons. Const.* s.a. 366; Jer. *Chron.* s.a. 366.

³³¹ *CTh* 10.19.4, 12.18.1; *CIG* 4 9842 = *ILCV* 2878; Soc. 4.11; Bagnall, et al. 1987, 268-9.

Valens then forwent the Persian frontier in favour of prioritizing the Danube by waging war on the Goths who had supported Procopius.³³² When conducting a similar trans-Danube campaign against the Sarmatians in the 350s, Constantius had kept Arbitio with him and entrusted the Persian frontier to his other *magister*, Ursicinus. Valens, on the other hand, kept both *magistri* with him and left the Persian front in command of lower ranked officers. As stated above, Valens' lack of military experience may have encouraged this, but it may have also been prompted by Victor's apparent inability to take command on the battlefield. Victor began his career under Constantius, and later took part in many military actions under Julian on the Persian campaign.³³³ These included commanding a daring night-time river crossing while under heavy fire, during which it seems he was wounded in the shoulder by an arrow.³³⁴ It would seem that this injury had a lasting impact, because Victor is never again recorded as commanding soldiers on the battlefield.³³⁵

This inability to command may have led Valens to consider Victor incapable of overseeing a frontier alone. A solution that might appear obvious would be to replace Victor with a new *magister*, or even appoint a third. There are several possible explanations for why Valens did not do this. He may have feared creating more potential usurpers in the upper ranks of the military, or he chose to not divert from the two-*magister* system established by his predecessors, although Valentinian had already promoted a third.³³⁶ Valens may have also simply thought the Empire adequately protected with the current *magistri*. Whatever the cause, Victor's specialty became diplomacy and negotiation rather than military command. When Valens sent an embassy to the Goths to learn why they had supported Procopius, it was headed by Victor.³³⁷

The Goths told Victor that Procopius had misled them into believing he was the legitimate emperor.³³⁸ Military victories over foreign enemies were an important part of imperial legitimacy, and Valens had so-far achieved none, so he dismissed their excuse and launched attacks across the Danube in 367 and 369. Arinthaëus, who had been promoted to replace Lupicinus, pillaged the

³³² AM, 16.10.3, 27.5.1, 31.3.4; Eun. fr. 37; Zos. 4.7.1-2; 10.1-2.

³³³ AM 25.5.2.

³³⁴ AM 24.6.4-6, .13; cf. Zos. 3.16.3, 25.7.

³³⁵ Although Victor was present at the Battle of Adrianople, he was clearly removed enough from the frontlines to first seek out the reserves, then save himself, and finally ride rapidly to bring word to Gratian, whereas two of the other *magistri* and Valens himself were closely involved enough to be killed. His role during Theodosius I's defeat in Macedonia is also unclear. See pages 71-73 for more. This lack of command ability has caused some historians to believe he retired sooner than in reality, e.g. Errington 1996b, 2.

³³⁶ See pages 55-56.

³³⁷ AM 26.10.3, 27.5.1.

³³⁸ AM 27.5.1.

Gothic countryside, but there was no decisive battle.³³⁹ In the east, Persian expansion into the Kingdoms of Armenia and Iberia drew Valens' attention, so he sent Victor and Arinthaëus to quickly negotiate a peace treaty with the Gothic leader Athanaric during the winter of 369-70.³⁴⁰ This settled the Gothic war, and allowed Valens to send Arinthaëus to Armenia in the summer of 370.³⁴¹

After successfully defending Armenia, Arinthaëus was rewarded the consulship of 372 and then he disappears, probably into retirement.³⁴² Epigraphic evidence indicates that in the early 370s a man named Julius was promoted to *comes et magister equitum et peditum per Orientam*.³⁴³ Victor was also in the east at this time, so this indicates Valens continued to employ only two *magistri*. The emperor did not actively campaign in Armenia, but from 371 he stayed in the east, headquartered mostly at Antioch but also in Hierapolis and Edessa.³⁴⁴ Thus, as before, both his *magistri* remained in the same theatre of operations as the emperor, leaving the Danube provinces of the eastern Empire to be managed, or more accurately mismanaged, by lower rank officers.³⁴⁵

In late 376, Valens sent Victor in an embassy to Persia to demand that Rome be allowed to maintain its influence in the Caucasus. Tensions escalated after two territories in Persian-controlled Armenia offered to surrender themselves to Victor, and Valens aggressively threatened Persia with war.³⁴⁶ His confidence was boosted because he had received word that a large group of Goths, different from those he had fought, had arrived on the Danube seeking permission to enter and

³³⁹ AM 27.5.4-6, 5.9; Zos. 4.11.2-3. Lenski 2002, 128 n.74, points out that it is curious that Victor was awarded the consulship for 369 even though Arinthaëus had done the most fighting, but the most likely explanation is that the consulship was awarded to Victor because of his seniority, and because his diplomatic role was highly valued.

³⁴⁰ AM 27.5.9; Zos. 4.11. For Persian expansion, see: Lenski 2002, 167-8; 2007a, 123-4.

³⁴¹ AM 27.12.13; Faust. Byz. 5.1; Mos. Chor. 3.37; Lenski 2002, 173.

³⁴² *CTh* 7.22.8, 6.4.19; *ICUR* n.s. 8 23412 = *ILCV* 2795B adn.; *P. Lips* 47.17; Bagnall, et al. 1987, 278-79. It is disputed whether Arinthaëus remained a *magister militum* after his consulship in 372. *P. Col.* VII 184.1 indicates that Arinthaëus survived his consular year, but Theod. *HE* 4.33 is the only dateable evidence remaining after this which indicates Arinthaëus was alive and in Constantinople in June 378. Woods 2001 is plagued with some unfortunate inaccuracies surrounding the *magisterium* in general, but he nevertheless demonstrates that Theodoret is unreliable and this story was probably fabricated to defame Valens' religion. Additionally, AM 30.2.3, which Woods misses, might indicate Arinthaëus was dead by 374. Therefore I agree that Theod. *HE* 4.33 should not be considered an accurate recording of history, and Arinthaëus most likely died in 373. The letters addressed to him from Basil of Caesarea (*Ep.* 179, 269) which are often dated to 374 and 378, must be dated earlier.

³⁴³ *CIL* III 88.

³⁴⁴ Lenski 2007.

³⁴⁵ Although the western province of Illyricum was controlled by the *magister militum* Aequitius, he held no authority in the eastern provinces.

³⁴⁶ AM 30.2.5-7; Blockley 1992, 36.

settle in the Roman Empire.³⁴⁷ In exchange they offered to provide many recruits for the army, which Valens hoped could bolster his forces and potentially even allow him to launch his own invasion of Persia. However, the officials overseeing the settlement of the Goths severely mistreated them and drove them into open rebellion.³⁴⁸ By spring 377 Valens ceased any plans for an invasion and sent Victor to Shapur once again, this time to negotiate an urgent truce so the main Roman army could be extricated from the east and sent to the Danube.³⁴⁹

In terms of military operations, Valens' reign up to 376 was a muted period. Although he engaged in both civil and foreign war, he did not manage to fight any major battles. It is important to note, however, that despite his unremarkable military career, and his reliance on his *magistri*, Valens kept up the expected image of a military capable emperor. He was vigorously active with his army, and it appears he was always planning greater campaigns when possible, whether against the Goths or Persians. This activity seems to have been enough to keep his *magistri* in line and serving his agenda rather than their own.

³⁴⁷ Lenski 2002, 183.

³⁴⁸ AM 31.5.1-8; Zos. 4.20.6-7.

³⁴⁹ AM 31.7.1; Blockley 1992, 37; Lenski 2002, 184. The details of the truce between the Romans and Persians are not recorded, but the Armenian sources relate that they defended themselves against a Persian attempt at occupation and then ruled themselves independently for seven years (Faust. Byz. 5.37-8; Mos. Chor. 3.40).

2.3 Crisis along the Danube

The Gothic crisis of 376 to 382 has been extensively investigated and reviewed by academics, so it will not be necessary to rehash it entirely. Unfortunately, this thesis also does not have the space required for a full exploration of the deeds and activities of the many *magistri* that operated during this short period. Furthermore, because Ammianus' history ends in 378, the evidence that remains is disjointed and less coherent, and would result in a stuttering account that is not conducive to concise narration. This section will instead analyse the dramatic expansion in the number of *magistri* that occurred during the Gothic crisis. At its beginning, there were three *magistri militum* in the entire Roman Empire, but over the course of the crisis, eight new *magistri* would be promoted, and in 378 there were no fewer than six in the Danube region alone. Scholars have often interpreted this as the inception for the larger eastern *magisterium* that persisted well into the Byzantine Empire.³⁵⁰ This section will especially focus on the effect of so many *magistri* on the political dynamic of the late fourth century, as well as whether the numbers helped or hindered the effectiveness of the army during this period. What is more, shortly after the crisis abated, almost all these *magistri* disappeared. We will explore why this may have happened, and what it meant for the future of the *magistri* and the Empire.

In early 377 the Goths were in open revolt in Thrace, and Victor had negotiated a hasty peace with Shapur so the army could be extricated from the east. Before he was able to go to the Danube, he was forced to deal with a revolt by the Saracens and their queen, Mavia.³⁵¹ This caused a delay, so he sent ahead an army under the command of Profuturus and Traianus.³⁵² They fought a large battle at Ad Salices, with both the Roman and barbarian sides taking heavy casualties.³⁵³ Valens had requested reinforcements from the west, and Gratian ordered Gallic soldiers under the command of his *comes domesticorum*, Flavius Richomeres, and transalpine and Pannonian forces under the command of Frigeridus, whose precise rank is unknown, to proceed to the Danube.³⁵⁴ Before they could leave, Merobaudes incited a significant portion of Richomeres' army to desert and

³⁵⁰ Mommsen 1889, 265; Enßlin 1930, 317; 1931a, 144; Hoepffner 1936, 485; Hoffman 1974, 393; Demandt 1970, 557.

³⁵¹ Ruf. *HE* 11.6; Soc. 4.36; Soz. 6.38; Theod. *HE* 4.23; Theoph. AM 5869; Nic. Cal. *HE* 11.47; Bowersock 1980; Shahid 1984, 138-202; Lenski 2002, 204 n.284. For a more cautious reading of the sources, see: Mayerson 1980. For dating, see Lenski 2007, 127 n.107.

³⁵² AM 31.7.1.

³⁵³ AM 31.7.2 ff., 8.1; Wanke 1990, 63, 157-58; *contra* Heather 1991, 144.

³⁵⁴ AM 31.7.3-4. For Frigeridus, see: *PLRE* 373-74.

remain in Gaul under the pretence of ensuring its safety, but this was probably to ensure plenty of soldiers remained under his direct command to preserve his powerbase.³⁵⁵ This episode is short but quite telling. Firstly, it shows that Merobaudes was now in Gaul and in command of Gratian's armies. The fact that he also shared the consulship of 377 with Gratian indicates he had been able to successfully leverage his elevation of Valentinian II to gain an extremely important position in the western government.³⁵⁶ The episode also demonstrates that Merobaudes had the power to treasonously contravene Gratian's direct orders with impunity. It will be discussed below how Gratian may have sought to limit Merobaudes' power, but for the moment, Merobaudes faced no direct repercussions for such a blatantly insubordinate act that benefitted his own interests.

Valens finally arrived in Constantinople on 30 May 378, and he began the significant expansion in upper military leadership that would evolve into the eastern Empire's permanent command system.³⁵⁷ He first gave Flavius Saturninus "temporary command of a cavalry army".³⁵⁸ This does not necessarily indicate that Saturninus was a *magister equitum*, but the importance of his future commands and eventual consulship in 383 lend themselves to this assessment.³⁵⁹ It seems Traianus was also promoted to the *magisterium*, but then, according to Theodoret, the emperor confronted him for not soundly defeating the Goths.³⁶⁰ Traianus retorted that it was not his fault, but rather it was Valens' Arianism which had turned God against the Romans.³⁶¹ In response, Valens removed Traianus from command. Ammianus does not preserve the same story, but he does corroborate Traianus' dismissal, and adds that he was replaced by Sebastianus, who seems to have been made into a *magister peditum*, indicating this was probably the position Traianus had just vacated.³⁶²

Once he had prepared his commanders, Valens marched the army to Adrianople. He had seemingly quickly forgiven the experienced Traianus and re-promoted him to the *magisterium*,

³⁵⁵ AM 31.7.4.

³⁵⁶ *CTh* 9.35.3, 8.7.14; *ICUR* n.s. 1 3188 = *ILCV* 4289; *P. Flor.* 1 95.82; AM 31.8.2; Bagnall, et al. 1987, 288-89; McEvoy 2013, 63.

³⁵⁷ For Valens' date of arrival in Constantinople, see: *Cons. Const.* s.a. 378; Soc. 4.38.1; *contra* AM 31.11.1; Eun. fr. 44.1; Zos. 4.21.1; Soz. 6.37.17, 39.2.

³⁵⁸ AM 31.8.3.

³⁵⁹ See page 114 for more on Saturninus' consulship.

³⁶⁰ AM 31.12.1.

³⁶¹ Theod. *HE* 4.33.3. The whereabouts of Profuturus after Ad Salices is unclear, but AM 31.8.3 indicates he survived the battle.

³⁶² AM 31.11.1. This was the same Sebastianus who had been removed from command by Merobaudes in 375. See page 60.

because he was present along with Victor, Sebastianus, and Saturninus.³⁶³ Combined with Julius on the Persian frontier, there were five eastern *magistri*, the highest number seen so far. They were also met by Richomeres, who informed them that Gratian was not far away with the western field army.³⁶⁴ However, Valens was jealous of both Gratian's recent victory over the Lentienses, an Alemanni group along the upper Rhine, and some successes that the *magister* Sebastianus had won against the Goths.³⁶⁵ Valens himself had still not been able to win a decisive victory over any of his foreign enemies. Scouts had also reported that the nearby contingent of barbarians numbered only ten thousand, which made him overly confident.³⁶⁶ He therefore called a council of war where he forced his generals to seek a decisive battle against the barbarians.³⁶⁷

The assigned duties of the *magistri* during the opening phases of the Battle of Adrianople on 9 August 378 are unfortunately unrecorded. Ammianus writes that Richomeres and some other officers were in attendance when the Goths delayed the battle by negotiating, and it is likely that some of the *magistri* were also present.³⁶⁸ They were certainly not competently supervising the army, because during the negotiations some soldiers prematurely rushed forward and attacked the Goths.³⁶⁹ This over-extended the Roman lines, and the Gothic cavalry was able to launch a devastating surprise attack on the Roman flank.³⁷⁰ The Goths exploited this success by attacking the main body of Roman infantry on two sides, which compressed the Romans so tightly that many could not even swing their swords.³⁷¹

The *magistri* reappear towards the end of the battle. Traianus was most likely in the centre with the emperor, because he called for aid after Valens was abandoned by his bodyguard.³⁷² Victor

³⁶³ AM 31.12.1. As mentioned in note 339, Arinthaesus had probably died before the Gothic war began, but if he had not, it may be that he retired or died at this point and Traianus was promoted to replace him, as argued by Lenski 2002, 363.

³⁶⁴ AM 31.12.4.

³⁶⁵ AM 31.12.1.

³⁶⁶ AM 31.12.3; Nicasie 1998, 246, theorises that this was probably half the Roman number, although estimates vary widely throughout scholarship. Note that, while the Goths were still the main body of barbarians, from this point onwards it was a large coalition of other barbarian groups, workers, and runaway slaves who had joined the raiding, and even some Roman deserters (Lenski 2002, 331-32).

³⁶⁷ AM 31.12.5-7 writes that Sebastianus supported Valens, while Victor cautioned the emperor to wait, although Zos. 4.23.6-24.1 switches it, writing that Sebastianus urged Valens to delay and the general's enemies at court who supported the emperor,

³⁶⁸ AM 31.12.14-16.

³⁶⁹ AM 31.12.16. For the way contemporaries thought generals should act during battle, see: Veg. 3.17.

³⁷⁰ AM 31.12.17.

³⁷¹ AM 31.13.2.

³⁷² AM 31.13.8.

heard him and sought out the reserves, but they had fled, so he, Saturninus, and Richomeres retreated off the field.³⁷³ Sebastianus may have co-commanded the centre with Traianus, because the two of them died on the battlefield, along with a multitude of other *tribuni* and *rectores*, and emperor Valens himself.³⁷⁴ They were two of only five *magistri* to fall in battle in the fourth century.³⁷⁵ Although none of the surviving *magistri* were punished for fleeing, some ancient sources blame them for the defeat.³⁷⁶ Libanius wrote that many people accused the generals of incompetence and cowardliness, which may have stemmed from their failure to maintain order in the army, as well as their flight.³⁷⁷

After the defeat at Adrianople, Victor quickly rode to Pannonia to deliver the news to Gratian.³⁷⁸ The western emperor clearly had little interest in avenging Valens or continuing the Gothic war himself, because he retreated to the defensible city of Sirmium. From there, he rebuilt the eastern administration, and new *magistri* played an important part. Most prominently, Theodosius was raised as the new eastern emperor on 19 January 379.³⁷⁹ The sources record that Theodosius had been summoned from Spain after the defeat at Adrianople; however it has been demonstrated by Malcolm Errington that this timeline is impossibly short, and Theodosius must have already been present in Gratian's army by the beginning of 378.³⁸⁰ It is unclear what rank he occupied during that year. One scholar theorises he was recruited directly as a *magister militum* based on his previous experience, but others have argued that he began as a *dux* and only later received a promotion to the *magisterium*.³⁸¹ Whatever the chronology of his promotions, Theodosius was the only fourth century *magister militum* to successfully become a lasting and legitimate emperor.³⁸²

³⁷³ AM 31.13.9.

³⁷⁴ AM 31.13.18.

³⁷⁵ The others being Romulus (at the Battle of Mursa, see Zos. 2.52.2), Promotus (although this was somewhat more of an assassination, see page 84), and Quintinus (he presumably met his death on his failed expedition, see note 415).

³⁷⁶ Them. *Or.* 15.189d; cf. Greg. Naz. *Or.* 22.2.

³⁷⁷ Lib. *Or.* 24.3-5.

³⁷⁸ Zos. 4.24.3; Errington 1996a, 440.

³⁷⁹ *Cons. Const.* s.a. 379; Soc. 5.2; Theod. *HE* 5.6.3; *Pan. Lat.* 12.11.1 ff.; *Epit.* 48.1; Soz. 7.2.1; Oros. 7.34.2.

³⁸⁰ Theod. *HE* 5.5-6. Errington 1996a, 438-40; and also Mathews 1975, 91. A similar conclusion on Theodoret's reliability was drawn by Sivan 1993.

³⁸¹ Blanco-Perez 2013, 150; Errington 1996a, 449; Heather and Moncur 2001, 219. For the primary evidence, see: Them. *Or.* 15.187d, 198a, and *Pan. Lat.* 12.10.2-3. For his previous experience, see: *Pan. Lat.* 12.8.3; Zos. 4.24, 16.6; Joh. Ant. fr. 180; AM 29.6.14-16.

³⁸² Sivan 1996 theorises that Theodosius should rightfully be called a usurper on the basis that the decision was forced upon Gratian. Theodosius' long-term legitimacy, however, differentiates him from the other magisterial usurpers, Vetranio and Silvanus.

The reasons behind Theodosius' initial recruitment into Gratian's army, as well as his eventual promotion to emperor, are complex. He was probably supported by an influential clique of friends and relatives at court, indicating favouritism and nepotism played a part in achieving military ranks.³⁸³ Gratian may have also been eager to promote a second *magister militum* to challenge Merobaudes' dominance, as he had been the west's sole *magister* since the death of the elder Flavius Theodosius. In the same way that he used his dominant position to keep his army whole, Merobaudes may have undermined any attempt to promote a second *magister*. None of the sources record Merobaudes' presence on the 378 campaign, so it was only once Gratian had escaped from Merobaudes' oversight that he was able to promote Theodosius, and then later Bauto, as *magistri*.³⁸⁴

The Gothic crisis would take nearly four more years to be resolved, and in this time six *magistri* would be participate. Modares and Majorianus both appear only briefly during the war, but Modares was also involved in the Christian First Council of Constantinople.³⁸⁵ The *magister* Sapores was appointed by Gratian to remove Valens' Arian priests and replace them with Niceneans that Gratian favoured.³⁸⁶ Thus we can conclude the *magistri* retained their important role in religious affairs. Also in the east, Julius executed numerous young Gothic men that had been taken as hostages.³⁸⁷ Interestingly, he did this without the permission of Theodosius, but instead sought authorisation from the Constantinopolitan Senate.³⁸⁸ Saturninus and Victor remained with

³⁸³ Matthews 1975, 91-98; 1971, 1075-76; Vanderspoel 1995, 187-95; Errington 1996a, 449. For an alternative view of where Theodosius received support, see: Sivan 1993, 121; cf. Barnes 1990, 162.

³⁸⁴ *Contra* Errington 1996a, 451.

³⁸⁵ Majorianus: Sid. Ap. *Carm.* 5.107-15. Modares in battle: Zos. 4.25.2-3; cf. Eun. fr. 45.1. Modares in the First Council of Constantinople: Greg. Naz. *Ep.* 136, 137. Hoffman 1974, 360 n.57, believes Modares to be the first *magister militum per Thracias* because he is recorded to have operated in Thrace. However, it is far from a certainty that he was given that title.

³⁸⁶ Theod. *HE* 5.2-3. Because he only appears in Greek sources, Sapores is not explicitly titled as a *magister militum*, but only as a *στρατιωτῶν*. As with the other ambiguous cases, we can make a judgment based on other evidence. Both Lib. *Ep.* 957 and Theod. *HE* 5.2 praise his military successes and say he was highly regarded, and he is also associated with Julius and Victor, other *magistri*. Additionally, his mission is similar to the one given to the *magister militum* Flavius Salia in 344. Thus, we can be confident Sapores was a *magister militum*.

³⁸⁷ Zos. 4.26.2-9; AM 31.16.8. Eun. fr. 42 corroborates the existence of these Goths, but his record of the massacre has been lost. Ammianus put this event just after Adrianople and therefore before Theodosius' accession, but Zos. 4.26.4 places it later, either in 379 or early 380. Although Ammianus is typically the more preferable historian, Zosimus' version of this event is quite comprehensive and significantly more coherent than the surrounding sections of his narrative, and it allows more time for the necessary planning for such an operation, and so he should be followed in this case (Kulikowski 2007, 147; cf. Heather 1991, 147-48).

³⁸⁸ Zos. 4.26.5-9. Also see: Demandt 1970, 710-11.

Theodosius' main army, and were probably with him when he was sorely defeated by the Goths in Macedonia in 380, marking the second major defeat that these generals were involved in.³⁸⁹ They were also with him when he first entered Constantinople in November 380, because they released a monk they had imprisoned under Valens.³⁹⁰ Richomeres was transferred to the eastern administration, and at some point was promoted to the *magisterium*.³⁹¹ The final general to operate along the Danube during this period was the western general Bauto.³⁹²

The efforts of all these *magistri* slowly attrited the Goths and pushed them to negotiate a peace in 382.³⁹³ The treaty ended the war by settling the Goths autonomously within the Empire.³⁹⁴ Interestingly, the *magistri* involved in this crisis seem to have left our records just as quickly as they appeared. Julius, Modares, Majorianus, Sapores, and Victor all vanished by 383. Saturninus remained present in Constantinople, but is not attested as having campaigned or commanded soldiers again.³⁹⁵ The only *magistri* that remained active were Merobaudes and Bauto in the west, and Richomeres in the east. This rapid reduction in numbers has multiple explanations. Some left the *magisterium* in an expected manner, such as Victor's overdue retirement.³⁹⁶ Majorianus was

³⁸⁹Zos. 4.31.2-5; Heather 1991, 152.

³⁹⁰ On entering Constantinople in November: *Cons. Const.* s.a. 380. On the arrest of the monk, Isaac, see: *Vita Isaacii* 2.8. On his release, see: *Vita Isaacii* 3.10. For further discussion, see: Shahid 1984, 168-69; Lenski 2004, 107-113.

³⁹¹ He also seems to have been one of the more important persons, because it was said that he had been promised the consulship of 384 as early as the beginning of 383, which was a rare occurrence (*Them. Or.* 16.201b). To the best of our knowledge, no *comes domesticorum* was ever made consul without first being promoted to the *magisterium*. In 391 Richomeres is confirmed as a *magister utriusque militiae*, and he was possibly promoted to this position as early as 383 to fit in before his consulship (*CTh* 7.1.13; cf. Enßlin 1931a, 138). Libanius wrote that Richomeres had been in the east before 384, so he may have replaced Sapores or Julius there once Theodosius took over control of eastern affairs (*Lib. Or.* 1.219). For other westerners who served in in the early years of Theodosius' reign, see: Errington 1996b, 2-3.

³⁹² Zos. 4.33.1-2. *Soc.* 5.25 says Bauto hailed from Galatia Minor, although this is contradictive both with the other evidence of his Frankish heritage and his service in the western military. On dating this campaign, see: Heather 1991, 155. Bauto is another general who the sources do not explicitly name as a *magister militum*, but the importance of his mission probably involved an army larger than one commanded by a *comes rei militaris*. Furthermore, he later gained such a powerful position that he must have become a *magister* at some point, and it was probably at the beginning or end of this campaign to the Danube. cf. Demandt 1970, 609.

³⁹³ Zos. 4.33.1-2; *Them. Or.* 16.208b-209d, 210d.

³⁹⁴ *Cons. Const.* s.a. 382. *Syn. de reg.* 19.43.5 records that the Goths lived under their own laws, and *Jord. Get.* 27.141-46 describes it as an equal agreement rather than a surrender, in the manner that *Them. Or.* 16 portrays it. The speculative nature of modern academic works on the 381 treaty is summarised in Kulikowski 2002, 77-78 n.28. Also see: Stickler 2007, 504-5; Faber 2013.

³⁹⁵ *Them. Or.* 16 title; *CTh* 6.2.13. 10.3.4; *CIL* 6 501 = *ILS* 4149; *P. Gen* 12.1. He remained in Constantinople as a prominent aristocrat until his exile was demanded by Gainas (*Greg. Naz. Ep.* 132; Zos. 5.18.7-9; *Soc.* 6.6; *Soz.* 8.4; *Joh. Ant. fr.* 190).

³⁹⁶ Victor had been an officer for at least twenty years and a *magister* for seventeen, under five different emperors. This was the longest career of our period, although it is matched by Stilicho's, whose career extends past our purview.

appointed to oversee Illyricum when Gratian gave it to Theodosius, and when it was returned, Majorianus lost his command.³⁹⁷ Another potential explanation comes from Zosimus. While he gives credit to the generals for having saved the eastern Empire, he castigated Theodosius for having so drastically strained the imperial fisc paying them all.³⁹⁸ Thus, financial concerns could have also motivated Theodosius to reduce his *magistri*.³⁹⁹

The emperor may have also feared potential imperial rivals. Themistius, an imperial orator and propagandist, tried to place a positive spin on the Gothic peace treaty by explaining that it was better to make them into farmers rather than continue fighting and fill the Empire with corpses.⁴⁰⁰ But Theodosius had spent nearly four years attempting to destroy the Goths only to fail, and he probably felt his legitimacy as an emperor was threatened. If so, he could have taken the opportunity to remove some potential military usurpers from power.⁴⁰¹ It is of course also possible that the *magistri* may only be appearing to have vanished because of the poor state of the ancient sources. However, the sources do not leave this period entirely dark; they contain references that indicate that lower ranks were in command of many of the military operations that took place after the Gothic peace treaty.⁴⁰² So perhaps some more *magistri* existed in this gap, but it seems very unlikely that Theodosius maintained the full complement of *magistri* during these years. Yet, more crises would soon plague his reign, and he would once again expand his *magisterium*.

Another assessment to make is whether the employment of so many *magistri* over the course of the Gothic crisis assisted or hampered the army's efficacy. While it was Valens who made the reckless decision to engage at Adrianople without western reinforcements, the catastrophes on the day of battle can be attributed to the operational and tactical failures of the *magistri*. They failed to prevent units from prematurely engaging, they did not locate the Gothic cavalry prior to the

³⁹⁷ Soz. 7.4.1; Errington 1996b, 22-27; Kulikowski 2007, 150. Demandt 1970, 602-3, believes that Majorianus' successor, Vitalianus, may have been a *magister militum* at this time, but because he had previously only reached the rank of *protector domesticus*, I do not think this is likely.

³⁹⁸ Zos. 4.27.1-3. Errington 1996b, 3, incorrectly writes that we do not know enough individuals to fill Zosimus' claim of five *magistri*, although as demonstrated, we have more.

³⁹⁹ For a lengthier discussion of the vicissitudes of the late Roman economy, see: Potter 2015.

⁴⁰⁰ Them. *Or.* 16.211a-b.

⁴⁰¹ Interestingly, Mommsen believed that Theodosius might have maintained the enlarged *magisterium* he inherited from Valens in order to counter-balance the power of the military, especially in the face of the power exhibited by Merobaudes (Mommsen 1901, 536-37). However, neither Mommsen nor any other historian has emphasised the temporary downsizing in Theodosius' *magisterium*, which presents a flaw in this theory.

⁴⁰² Them. *Or.* 18 220d-221a; Claud. *de cons. Stil.* 1.51-68; Zos. 4.40.

surprise assault, and they left the reserves unsupervised which allowed them to leave the battlefield. Additionally, Saturninus and Victor were later unable to prevent Theodosius' newly recruited army from being destroyed in Macedonia, although we are aware of fewer details in this engagement. However, the *magistri* were redeemed when they operated independently. Julius was praised for saving the eastern cities by massacring the hostages, Modares won a great victory in Thrace, and Majorianus and Bauto both successively drove the Goths out of Illyricum.⁴⁰³ Thus, it seems that many *magistri* together were not successful in the largest engagements of the war, but when operating with smaller armies and independent of the emperors, they were able to wear down the barbarians and push them towards the peace agreement.

⁴⁰³ Julius' praise: Zos. 4.26.9. Modares' victory: Zos. 4.25.2-3. Majorianus' role: Sid. Ap. *Carm.* 5.107-15. Bauto's role: Zos. 4.33.1-2.

2.4 The First Civil War of the Late Fourth Century: Magnus Maximus, Valentinian II, and Theodosius I

Eastern and western affairs have generally been separated in the previous sections, but the final years under review in this project revolved around two major civil wars between the two halves of the Empire. This means that a separated examination would serve only to confuse matters, and so this section will look at the east and west together. These civil wars were both symptoms of, and responsible for, major changes in the *magisterium* and the wider Empire. We will see how a small number of western *magistri* concentrated great power into their hands and were able to dominate the western emperors, while at the same time the eastern *magisterium* expanded once again to a larger number of generals. This resulted in the dilution of eastern military power, and no individual *magister* was able to eclipse the power of the primary civil officials.⁴⁰⁴ This difference had a significant impact on the divergent paths of the two halves of the Empire.

Gratian had shifted his entire court and administration from Trier to Milan to be nearer the Gothic crisis, and after its end, Bauto and Arbogast returned there with the army, most likely in late 382 or early 383.⁴⁰⁵ This move to northern Italy changed the established power dynamics of the western Empire by placing the emperor closer to the influence of the Roman Senate and other important individuals, such as Ambrose, the bishop of Milan. It also took Gratian further away from the Gallic and British armies, which had grown accustomed to having proximity to an emperor that took care of their interests. Gratian might have been aware of this danger, because he tried to placate Merobaudes, who remained in Gaul as *magister militum*, by awarding him the consulship of 383.⁴⁰⁶ This made him the first non-royal family member since the time of Constantine I to be granted a second consulship. Furthermore, Gratian had just officially ordained that the consulship

⁴⁰⁴ Mommsen 1889, 264-65; Boak 1915, 124; Grosse 1920, 186; Jones 1964, 161, 177-78; Demandt 1970, 727. Even though Rufinus would eventually be killed on the orders of the *magister militum* Stilicho, the eastern generals were still unable to take control of the eastern government, and another civilian official, the *praepositus sacri cubiculi* Eutropius, gained the preeminent position in Constantinople.

⁴⁰⁵ It is unclear whether Valentinian had remained with Gratian this entire time; Ammianus said that Gratian acquiesced to overseeing the young boy's education in 375, which might mean the young boy travelled to Trier to stay with his half-brother (McEvoy 2013, 62; cf. Errington 2006, 31).

⁴⁰⁶ *CTh* 6.2.13; *ICUR* n.s. 2 5996 = *ILCV* 4623; *CIL* 6 501; *P. Gen.* 12.1; Bagnall, et al. 1987, 300-1, 650-52.

was another rung in the administrative hierarchy, and that any *magister militum* who held the consulship was to be ranked above those who had not.⁴⁰⁷ However, Gratian had a difficult time shedding a perceived weakness that stemmed from his promotion as a child-emperor, and he angered the Gallic armies through an apparent favouritism of Alan mercenaries, which may have been an attempt to create a military powerbase with loyalty to him rather than to Merobaudes.⁴⁰⁸ For these reasons, the soldiers rebelled under the banner of an officer in Britain named Magnus Maximus in early 383.⁴⁰⁹

Maximus crossed onto the continent in the summer, and Gratian moved north to confront him.⁴¹⁰ They skirmished near Paris for five days, after which Gratian's entire army defected to Maximus.⁴¹¹ Gratian fled but was soon captured and executed on 25 August 383.⁴¹² By summer 384 an unofficial armistice with a tripartite division of the Empire began to form. The *magistri militum* of each emperor poses unique questions and analyses that will be discussed below.

The most difficult problems arise from Magnus Maximus' *magistri*. Because his reign was de-legitimised and denounced after his death, none of his laws is explicitly contained in the *Codex Theodosianus*, although two may have been included under the names of the other emperors.⁴¹³ Furthermore, none of the histories treat him with the detail the other emperors received. It is thus difficult ascertain much information about his *magistri*. Andragathius was the officer who captured and executed Gratian, and he would continue to be one of the only named generals from Maximus' reign, so he was probably a *magister militum*.⁴¹⁴ In 388, we encounter two other generals in Gaul when the Franks attacked near Cologne.⁴¹⁵ Nannienus and Quintinus were both given the title *militaris magister* by Sulpicius Alexander, and their role in Gaul supports interpreting these two as *magistri*. It is unclear why Maximus decided Gaul required two *magistri* when it had been under the control of one since 373, and after he was overthrown, Gaul was placed once again under the control of a single general. The role of Merobaudes after the defeat of Gratian is also unclear.

⁴⁰⁷ *CTh* 6.6.1; Demandt 1970, 604-5.

⁴⁰⁸ Zos. 4.35.2-3; McEvoy 2013, 84-85.

⁴⁰⁹ *Pan. Lat.* 12.23.3, 38.2; *Prosp. Tiro* s.a. 384; *V. Mart.* 20.3; *Soc.* 5.2.2; *Soz.* 7.13.1; *Philost. HE* 10.5.8-9; Zos. 4.35.3-4; *Epit.* 47.7; *Eun. fr.* 55; *Claud. De iv cons. Hon.* 73; *Ruf. HE* 11.14; *Oros.* 7.34.9.

⁴¹⁰ Errington 2006, 32; McLynn 1994, 154.

⁴¹¹ Zos. 4.35.5.

⁴¹² Zos. 4.35.5-6; *Ruf. HE* 2.14; *Soz.* 7.13.8 ff.; *Soc.* 5.11.7; *Zon.* 13.17.

⁴¹³ Honoré 1998, 187.

⁴¹⁴ See note 412.

⁴¹⁵ This entire episode is found in *Greg. Tur. HF* 2.9.

Because of his position in command of the Gallic soldiers, he must have been present at Paris. Prosper of Aquitaine records that he betrayed Gratian and if so, given his position, he was probably instrumental in prompting the desertion of the army.⁴¹⁶ If we follow this account, then we can assume that Merobaudes was content enough with his powerful position in Gratian's regime, but once it seemed that Gratian may lose to the usurper, Merobaudes was quick to abandon the young emperor, again placing his own interests first.

However, Pacatus' testifies that Maximus ordered the murder of the officer Vallio, and that he also forced Merobaudes to commit suicide.⁴¹⁷ Some historians have taken this version to mean Merobaudes did not join Maximus, but was captured like Gratian.⁴¹⁸ However, it is possible to reconcile Pacatus with Prosper by theorising that Merobaudes deserted Gratian for Maximus, who then forced the *magister* to commit suicide at a later date.⁴¹⁹ If so, then Maximus seems to have been able to exert the same level of control over his *magistri* that earlier emperors had done, indicating that it was not inevitable that western *magistri* would become extremely powerful, and strong emperors could still keep their ambition in check.

While Gratian was still alive, Valentinian had only been a 'phantom emperor' without any real power, but after Gratian's death he underwent a 'real accession' and became technically the senior emperor, having been raised more than three years before Theodosius.⁴²⁰ However, he faced difficulties in truly gaining the imperial authority of someone who came to the throne as an

⁴¹⁶ Prosp. Tiro s.a. 384. For historians who take Prosper's version, see: Enßlin 1931a, 134; Vetter 1960; Mathews 1975, 173; Rodgers 1981; Nixon and Rodgers 1994, 477-78 n.79; Bagnall, et al. 1987, 650-52; Potter 2004.

⁴¹⁷ *Pan. Lat.* 12.28.4-5. Vallio is probably the most difficult potential *magister militum* to include or exclude in this study. Pacatus, in *Pan. Lat.* 12.28.4-5, gives Vallio high praise, saying he had celebrated a Triumph. However, Triumphs were a privilege reserved for the emperors alone, and therefore it is unclear exactly what Pacatus means by this and it leaves Vallio's rank in the military uncertain. *Amb. Ep.* 24.11 emphasises that Vallio was a warrior of high repute and loyalty, but he only calls him a *comes*. Thus, the sources are not clear, and we once again must rely on contextual evidence. It was uncommon for *magistri* to be stationed in Britain during the fourth century. Some had been sent there during the unrest of 360 and 367, and it is possible that Gratian had heard the stirrings of the rebellion which would raise Maximus to the purple, and so he may have sent a *magister* there to deal with it in the early 380s. However, a *comes*, the title Ambrose gives Vallio, is a more common rank found in Britain (*Not. Dig. Occ.* 18, 19), and furthermore, we have seen that Merobaudes tended to restrict the *magisterium* to himself alone during this period. Thus, we should conclude that it is unlikely that Vallio was a *magister militum* (Demandt 1970, 603).

⁴¹⁸ For proponents of this theory, see: Demandt 1970, 598-99, 606; Waas 1971, 97; Barnes 1975, 159-60. Barnes is the only academic to propose a reason to dismiss Prosper, on the basis that he confused Merobaudes with Andragathius. For the problems and dismissal of this argument, see: Rodgers 1981, 94-95; Waas 1971, 98; Bagnall, et al. 1987, 650-2.

⁴¹⁹ *PLRE*, 599; Rodgers 1981, 104; O'Flynn 1983, 4.

⁴²⁰ McEvoy 2013, 50.

accomplished adult. In his government in Italy, the *magister* Bauto quickly became one of the leading men. Historians, however, have had mixed interpretations of his actual importance. Some have said that he was the “mainstay” of the regime, and he dominated all affairs, even those unrelated to military matters, while other works on the period have ignored him almost entirely.⁴²¹ The belief that Bauto was so powerful possibly stems from the works of Ambrose, who describes Bauto as a man of the “most distinguished dignity as chief of the military”, and he also writes that Maximus complained Bauto was trying to form his own personal kingdom by controlling Valentinian.⁴²² Additionally, Bauto was the only non-imperial family member of Valentinian’s government to be made a consul.⁴²³

These details would seem to indicate that Bauto was quite powerful, but deeper inquiry reveals that his power was challenged by other ministers and grandees in Italy. Valentinian’s first nominee for the consulship in 385 was actually the Praetorian Prefect Vettius Agorius Praetextatus, but he died before taking the office and Bauto was offered his place.⁴²⁴ Additionally, Bauto’s name was not attached to any of the laws that came out of Valentinian’s court during this time. A *magister militum*’s power stemmed from the army, but the Italian garrison had become extremely weak.⁴²⁵ Most of the army had defected to Maximus in 383, leaving only light garrisons and whatever forces Bauto could recruit, which was a difficult task in the late fourth century.⁴²⁶ Thus Bauto was forced to rely upon barbarian soldiers recruited from the Huns and Alans to repulse a Iuthungi attack on Raetia.⁴²⁷ He later used the same soldiers to harass Maximus in Gaul, and might have used them to fortify the Alpine passes.⁴²⁸ This weakness might explain his inability to be ultimately powerful during this time.

⁴²¹ For those that prioritise Bauto, see: O’Flynn 1983, 6-7; Demandt 1970, 607-8; McEvoy 2013, 67, 129; McLynn 1994, 159; Bloch 1945, 214; Bleckmann 2009, 219. For those that ignore him, see: Matthews 1975, 188; Williams and Friell 1994, 39. It situation might be more clear if Augustine’s panegyric to Bauto had survived, which is referenced in Aug. c. *Lit. Petil.* 25.30.

⁴²² Amb. *Ep.* 57.3, 24.4.

⁴²³ In 385: *CTh* 1.23.5; *CJ* 1.55.4; *ICUR* n.s. 7 17489 = *ILCV* 4258B; *P. Lips.* 62 2.17; Bagnall, et al. 1987, 304-5.

⁴²⁴ Symm. *Rel.* 3.12; Jer. *Ep.* 23.23.

⁴²⁵ Maximus was aware that Valentinian was in a much weaker position than he (*Amb. Ep.* 24.3).

⁴²⁶ For the most expansive work on the late Empire’s endemic recruitment problems, see Boak 1955, although the theory of manpower shortage has been doubted by Elton 1996, 154-56.

⁴²⁷ Amb. *Ep.* 18.21, 24.8. Amb. *Ep.* 20.12 also indicates that Justina employed soldiers recruited from amongst the Goths as a personal retinue.

⁴²⁸ Amb. *Ep.* 24.7-8.

The ongoing struggle over the Altar of Victory and other religious privileges also highlights the limits of Bauto's power. This Altar, placed in the *curia* by Augustus, had been removed by Gratian in 382 as part of his pro-Christian agenda.⁴²⁹ In 384, the pagan Urban Prefect of Rome, Quintus Aurelius Symmachus, petitioned for the restoration of the Altar on behalf of the city of Rome.⁴³⁰ His petition was stridently opposed by Ambrose, who composed two counter-letters and delivered them at court in the presence of Bauto and Flavius Rumoridus, another *magister militum* in Italy, although one of seemingly significantly less importance than Bauto.⁴³¹ Ambrose convinced the emperor to deny Symmachus, and the two generals were forced to acquiesce despite their own pagan beliefs.⁴³² This may have been a calculated move by Bauto in order to win favour with the Christians in government and allow the emperor to have control over these 'ceremonial' affairs, or it may have been a decision he could not contravene.⁴³³ In the end, while Bauto was undoubtedly one of the most important men in Valentinian's government, and possibly one of the few men able to actively preserve the reign from an invasion by Maximus, his power was not unconditional and seems to have remained mostly within the bounds of the military. Bauto died before summer 387, and he was replaced by his long-time deputy, Arbogast. Eunapius records that Arbogast's bravery and contempt for wealth had earned him the loyalty of the soldiers, and he was able to assume the position of dominant *magister militum* without the assent of Valentinian.⁴³⁴ However, while an important demonstration of the power of the military, the sources do not specify if Valentinian vehemently resisted the appointment of such an experienced general, or was happy to have experienced office leading his army at such a time.⁴³⁵

The final *magistri* to be examined during this period of détente are those under Theodosius in the east. After a brief period of stability following the Gothic peace, the eastern Empire faced

⁴²⁹ According to Symm. *Rel.* 3.7, Constantius had already removed the Altar, but it had evidently been restored, possibly under Julian (Cameron 2011, 33-34). Gratian also declined the traditional imperial title of *pontifex maximus*, the chief pagan priest (Zos. 4.36.5, cf. Cameron 2011), and he defunded the pagan cults and Vestal Virgins, which may have been the most important issue for the pagans (Symm. *Rel.* 3.15, Cameron 2011, 98 ff.).

⁴³⁰ Symm. *Rel.* 3; Amb. *Ep.* 57.

⁴³¹ Amb. *Ep.* 17, 18. Amb. *Ep.* 57.3 records that Rumoridus was of the "same rank" as Bauto, which implies he was also a *magister militum*, although it would seem he was not as important as Bauto as he had no further recordings in the fourth century, other than maybe some undated brick-stamps from Thrace (*Bull. Comm.* 1942, app. p. 140). He reappears as consul in 403 (Bagnall, et al. 1987, 340-41).

⁴³² For a discussion of Amb. *Ep.* 57.3 and whether it implies both Bauto and Rumoridus were pagans, see page 100-1.

⁴³³ See pages 92-94 for more on the developing religious role of the emperors.

⁴³⁴ Eun. fr. 58; Zos. 4.53.1; Joh. Ant. fr. 212.

⁴³⁵ Demandt 1970, 608-10.

renewed military pressure, including negotiations with a new Persian king, tensions in Armenia, another Arab revolt, an invasion by the Greuthungi, and an expedition to retrieve Gratian's body from Maximus.⁴³⁶ In the face of these concerns, Theodosius again expanded his *magisterium*. The first addition was Ellebichus, who seems to have appeared in the east from 384.⁴³⁷ He was an important *magister militum* and aristocrat in the east. He maintained regular correspondence with notable easterners and built a mansion and baths in Antioch.⁴³⁸ He was also invited to give his opinion in the Constantinopolitan Senate, the first barbarian to do so.⁴³⁹ In 386 a law carries Flavius Timasius' name with the title *comes et magister equitum*, and he travelled to Valentinian's regime in Italy where he presided over two legal cases on behalf of Theodosius.⁴⁴⁰ The third new appointee, Flavius Promotus, fended-off an invasion by the Greuthungi in a major river battle in 386.⁴⁴¹ He is never explicitly given a Latin title, but he was one of the most important eastern generals, and we can be confident he was a *magister militum*. One more *magister*, Butherichus, appears in the east around this time.⁴⁴² Although we do not know his exact title, when he was killed in a riot in Thessalonica, emperor Theodosius ordered an unprecedented massacre of the city's civilians. This extreme reaction, in addition to the fact that Butherichus was probably involved in suppressing the raiding occurring in the area, lends itself to the assumption he was a *magister*.⁴⁴³ Finally, Theodosius retained Richomeres, who was awarded the consulship of 384, indicating he was probably the most privileged general, which brings the east's total to five *magistri*.⁴⁴⁴

Eventually, Maximus broke the stalemate and invaded Italy in 387, but Valentinian had enough warning to flee to Thessalonica and plead with Theodosius to assist him retake his territories.⁴⁴⁵ In 388 Theodosius took the eastern army to restore Valentinian to the western throne, and he brought as commanders the *magistri* Timasius, Promotus, Richomeres, and

⁴³⁶ Persian negotiations: Oros. 8.34.8; Them. *Or.* 16.212d-213a; *Epit.* 48.5; Marcell. *com. s.a.* 384; *Pan. Lat.* 12.22.4-5. Armenia: Blockley 1987, 230-34; 1992, 42-44; Gutmann 1991, 229-32; Garsoian 1999, 45-46. The Arab revolt: Ball 2016, 100-1. The Greuthungi invasion: Zos. 4.35.1, 4.38-39; cf. Ridley 2006, 88 n.109. The expedition: Them. *Or.* 18.220d-221a; Matthews 1975, 178.

⁴³⁷ *CTh* 9.39.1.

⁴³⁸ *Lib. Or.* 1.232; *Ep.* 898; Greg. Naz. *Ep.* 225; cf. Demandt 1970, 711, 718.

⁴³⁹ *Lib. Ep.* 925; Waas 1971, 33. On his ethnicity, see the Chapter 4.4 and the Appendix.

⁴⁴⁰ *CTh* 4.17.5; Symm. *Ep.* 3.72-73.

⁴⁴¹ Zos. 4.35.1, 4.38-39. Petronius Probus was mistaken for Promotus in this incident by Williams and Friell 1994, 43.

⁴⁴² Soz 7.25.3; Ruf. *HE* 2.18.

⁴⁴³ Zos. 4.45.3; McLynn 1994, 315-30.

⁴⁴⁴ *CTh* 13.1.12; *ICUR* n.s. VII 17486; *P. Lips.* 62 i.24; Soc. *HE* 5.12. This might be the period encapsulated in the eastern *Notitia Dignitatum*.

⁴⁴⁵ Zos. 4.42.1.

Arbogast.⁴⁴⁶ Valentinian did not accompany the army, but travelled back to Italy via the Adriatic Sea, so Maximus gave Andragathius a fleet to try to stop him.⁴⁴⁷ This is the only fourth-century example of a *magister militum* being given a specific seafaring naval command.⁴⁴⁸ On land, Theodosius drove Maximus back into Aquileia where he was eventually captured and executed.⁴⁴⁹ After learning that Maximus had been defeated, Andragathius is reported to have leapt overboard and drowned himself rather than suffer the fate of his emperor.⁴⁵⁰

The roles of the *magistri militum* during the civil war of the late 380s makes it clear that the nature of the office of *magister militum* diverged under different emperors. Merobaudes had established a powerful position in Gratian's regime, but the record that he was forced to commit suicide by Magnus Maximus indicates this militarily capable and experienced emperor was able to control his *magistri* more effectively. Similarly, Theodosius seemed to face no resistance from his *magistri*, and was able to easily increase the number of eastern generals, something that Gratian had failed to do while under the control of Merobaudes. Conversely, Bauto and then Arbogast, as well as other important individuals like Ambrose, were able to establish firm control over Valentinian II, even though he was rightfully the senior legitimate emperor.

⁴⁴⁶ Zos. 4.45.2; Philost. *HE* 10.8. Interestingly, Zosimus says that Timasius was in charge of the infantry, even though the *Codex Theodosianus* lists him as *magister equitum* (see note 440). This is one of the few examples of contradiction between sources.

⁴⁴⁷ Zos. 4.46.1-2; Amb. *Ep.* 40.23.

⁴⁴⁸ Demandt 1970, 606.

⁴⁴⁹ *Pan. Lat.* 12.34-36; Amb. *Ep.* 40.22; Zos. 4.46.3-4.

⁴⁵⁰ Zos. 4.47.1; Soc. 5.14.2; Soz. 7.14.6; Oros. 7.35.3-5; Marcell. *com. s.a.* 388; Claud. *de IV cons. Hon.* 91-93; Amb. *Ep.* 40.22; cf. Joh. Ant. fr. 186; *contra* Zon. 8.18.

2.5 The Second Civil War of the Late Fourth Century: The Rise and Fall of Arbogast as the Most Powerful *Magister Militum*

The second civil war under examination in this thesis was preceded by the hitherto highpoint of magisterial power. Arbogast was able to exploit Valentinian II's weaknesses to concentrate a massive degree of power in his own hands. This was made clear to the imperial court when he publicly refused a direct order from the emperor to stand down. After Valentinian's death, Arbogast held onto his position by raising Eugenius as an emperor. However, this bold move would trigger the civil war that would ultimately bring about his death. At the same time, it is possible to discern a distinctly different development in the eastern Empire, as command of the armies became divided amongst five separate *magistri*, and the civil official Rufinus was able to overshadow them all and prevent them from gaining too much power.

After he defeated Maximus, Theodosius resided in Milan to consolidate the western Empire. He probably already intended for the eastern Empire to be inherited by his eldest son, Arcadius, and for the west to be taken by his youngest, Honorius. Thus, he had no desire for Valentinian to be a strong and influential emperor, and so he relegated him to distant Trier before returning to Constantinople in 391. We have seen that Theodosius reduced the number of *magistri* following the end of the Gothic crisis in the early 380s. After he dealt with the crisis posed by Maximus' rebellion, Theodosius instead continued to employ a high number of *magistri* throughout the remaining years of his reign. Ellebichus disappears from the record around this time, and the deaths of Butherichus and Promotus further reduced the numbers of the eastern *magisterium*. But to replace them, Theodosius added Flavius Stilicho, Addaeus, and Flavius Abundantius to his veterans Timasius and Richomeres, which kept the number of generals at five.⁴⁵¹ While the *magistri* were still important individuals in the east, with the armies partitioned amongst them, no individual was able to wield significant amounts of power. Furthermore, laws were issued to curtail their ability to expand their influence into the civil sphere.⁴⁵²

⁴⁵¹ Stilicho: *CTh* 7.4.18, 7.9.3. Addaeus: *CTh* 16.8.9, 1.5.10, 7.2. Abundantius: *CTh* 12.1.128. Timasius: Zos. 4.51.1. Richomeres: Zos. 4.54.2; Lib. *Ep.* 1024.

⁴⁵² *Ie. CTh* 1.7.2.

Flavius Rufinus instead emerged as the most powerful official of the eastern Empire. He had accompanied the army to Italy as the *magister officiorum* in 388, where he had expanded the powers of this office.⁴⁵³ We can see his pre-eminence in late 391, when in Constantinople he publicly insulted the *magister* Promotus and was physically struck in return.⁴⁵⁴ In retaliation, he convinced Theodosius to transfer Promotus to a position in Thrace, and then arranged for him to be assassinated by a band of Bastarnae mercenaries.⁴⁵⁵ This episode is somewhat similar to the plots Ammianus accused Arbitio and Eusebius of hatching against Ursicinus. Yet Rufinus was successful. Afterwards, he continued his rise through a promotion to Praetorian Prefect, and he was made consul for 392.⁴⁵⁶ In this powerful position he was able to overshadow all other officials and bureaucrats, including the *magistri*. Combined with the fact that Theodosius was a militarily experienced emperor, the power of the eastern *magistri* was limited and they could not operate on their own initiative or progress their own agendas. For these reasons, we do not see the same level of influence which was exerted by contemporaneous western *magistri*.

After Theodosius left the west, the now twenty-year old emperor Valentinian nominally held power from Trier, but in reality, Theodosius had left the west in the hands of Arbogast. It was been previously theorised that Stilicho convinced Theodosius in 395 to leave the western *magisterium* unchanged, allowing him to wield absolute authority.⁴⁵⁷ However, as we have seen, the west had been dominated by one powerful *magister* since Merobaudes, and now Theodosius handed sole control to Arbogast. Thus, it is unlikely that Stilicho had to do any convincing. Theodosius seems to have had either no interest or ability to reform the western military administration to make it more in line with the east.

Despite what Theodosius thought, events quickly showed that Arbogast's loyalty was primarily to himself. The court moved to Vienne in 392, and Arbogast expanded his control over all 'active' parts of government.⁴⁵⁸ It was he and not Valentinian who campaigned across the Rhine against the Franks, and Arbogast was even powerful enough to execute friends of the emperor at

⁴⁵³ *CTh* 10.22.3.

⁴⁵⁴ *Zos.* 4.51.1-2.

⁴⁵⁵ *Zos.* 4.51.3; *Claud. de cons. Stil.* 1.94-6, *in Ruf.* 1.316-17.

⁴⁵⁶ *PLRE*, 778-79.

⁴⁵⁷ Mommsen 1889, 265.

⁴⁵⁸ McEvoy 2013, 117-27.

Valentinian's very feet.⁴⁵⁹ Finally, in the ultimate display of his power, when Valentinian attempted to oust him, Arbogast simply refused.⁴⁶⁰ This was an extremely important moment. As we have seen throughout the preceding decades, the *magistri* had served at the whim of the emperors, who had dismissed or killed them as they saw fit.⁴⁶¹ Now emperor Valentinian held no such power. Interestingly, as Bauto before him, Arbogast still did not override the western Empire's Christian convictions: another petition from the Roman Senate to restore state funding of paganism came to Valentinian in 391 but it failed to gain any respite.⁴⁶² As it may have been for Bauto, Arbogast could have declined to enforce his pagan beliefs to encourage the emperor's 'ceremonial' role, a development that will be discussed further in Chapter 3.1.

Theodosius had commandeered many of the Italian army's remaining units into his own eastern army.⁴⁶³ The rest must have gone with Arbogast into Gaul, because in the winter of 391-92, some unnamed barbarian raiders appeared in the Alps and the Italians panicked at their complete lack of defence.⁴⁶⁴ The Praetorian Prefect, Virius Nicomachus Flavianus, convinced Ambrose to travel to Vienne and request military aid, but the bishop hesitated: he did not want to incite conflict with either Theodosius or Arbogast by giving Valentinian an opportunity to command a military operation and win the loyalty of the soldiers. Valentinian learned of this and became desperate for the opportunity. The young emperor may have been developing some political acumen, because he told Ambrose that he wished to be baptised by him and him alone, an honour the bishop would not refuse. Around this time, Valentinian also sent letters to Theodosius begging him for aid against Arbogast, and he might have been planning to flee to him for a second time.⁴⁶⁵ Ambrose eventually departed for Gaul in early 392, but was only halfway there when word came that Valentinian was dead.

⁴⁵⁹ Joh. Ant. fr. 187; Greg. Tur. *HF* 2.9; Paul. *V. Amb.* 30; *ILS* 790.

⁴⁶⁰ Zos. 4.53.2-3; Joh. Ant. fr. 187. According to Zosimus, he told Valentinian that because he had not appointed him then he could not remove him. Demandt 1970, 609-10 thinks this is linked with Zos. 4.53.1 and Arbogast was referring to his appointment by the soldiers, but Bleckmann and Stein 2015, 525 point out that it is much more likely a reference to when Theodosius appointed him to oversee Valentinian.

⁴⁶¹ i.e. Ursicinus' dismissal in 360.

⁴⁶² *Amb. Ep.* 57.5; Paul. *V. Amb.* 26; McLynn 1994, 335; cf. Waas 1971, 30. On Arbogast's paganism, see: Paul. *V. Amb.* 26; Oros. 7.35.12.

⁴⁶³ Zos. 4.47.2; Hoffmann 1969-70, 469-519.

⁴⁶⁴ *Amb. de ob. Val. Iun.* 24; McLynn 1994, 335-37; cf. Hoffman 1974, 389.

⁴⁶⁵ *Amb. de ob. Val. Iun.* 24; Zos. 4.53.4; Joh. Ant. fr. 187.

The sources on the young emperor's death vary. Some declare that he had committed suicide, while others believe he had been assassinated by order of Arbogast.⁴⁶⁶ The inconclusiveness of the sources has led to a great deal of speculation by modern academics, but it is generally believed that Arbogast did not orchestrate Valentinian's death, because he was already in a position of power and he had nothing to gain through the emperor's death, and furthermore, he seemingly had no succession plan.⁴⁶⁷ However, Valentinian was growing increasingly resistant to Arbogast's control. Both Zosimus and John of Antioch record the vitriolic and hateful exchange that stemmed from Valentinian's attempt to dismiss Arbogast, and Philostorgius even records that the emperor tried but failed to draw a sword to strike at Arbogast.⁴⁶⁸ Arbogast may have also feared the emperor might escape and return with Theodosius' eastern army, as he had in 387.⁴⁶⁹ Thus, while powerful, it hardly seems that Arbogast's position was comfortable. Furthermore, it seems that the report of suicide originated from Arbogast, and so was perhaps a cover for his actions.⁴⁷⁰ Therefore he could not quickly implement a succession plan, as this would have ruined his subterfuge. Thus, we cannot confidently rule out murder.

While the sources make it very clear that Arbogast dominated Valentinian, they are not so transparent about Arbogast's relationship with the new emperor he raised, Eugenius. For example, Eugenius himself received the customary oaths of fealty from the Franks, and he would march with the armies in the later civil war as their leader, which is a departure from Arbogast's overt control over military affairs under Valentinian.⁴⁷¹ This has led to some historians assigning Eugenius the larger share of agency and almost ignoring Arbogast's role.⁴⁷² However, it is difficult to believe that Arbogast so quickly changed from being a tyrannical and even cruel *de facto* ruler to an obedient and loyal general. A more likely explanation is that Eugenius, because he became emperor as an adult, maintained the appearance of an active role. Because he had been a grammarian, Eugenius

⁴⁶⁶ For the verdict of suicide, see: Prosp. Tiro s.a. 392; Cass. s.a. 392. For murder by Arbogast, see: Soc. 5.25; Zos. 4.54.1-4; *Cons. Const.* s.a. 392; Marc. com. s.a. 392. Philost. *HE* 10.1 and Oros. 7.35.2 attribute Valentinian's death to murder but state that it was made to look like suicide (for more on Philostorgius, see Stickler 2011). Ruf. *HE* 11.31, the most contemporary ancient source, ascribes the death to reasons unknown. The unknown author of the *Epitome de Caesaribus* reports that Eugenius was responsible (*Epit.* 48), and finally, Soz. 7.22 records both tales without judgment.

⁴⁶⁷ Croke 1976, 244; Matthews 1975, 238; Szidat 1979, 490; McLynn 1994, 336-37; Barnes 1990, 165; McEvoy 2013, 97.

⁴⁶⁸ Philost. *HE* 11.1.

⁴⁶⁹ Zos. 4.53.2-3; Joh. Ant. fr. 187.

⁴⁷⁰ Bleckmann and Stein 2015, 529-31.

⁴⁷¹ Greg. Tur. *HF* 2.9

⁴⁷² Ie. Cameron 2011, 5; Szidat 1979, 506.

would not be expected to have the strategic mind to command the armies, but as emperor, it was expected for him to be present and nominally lead, and this is the role he duly played, while Arbogast controlled affairs from behind-the-scenes.⁴⁷³

In the summer of 394, Theodosius prepared for another military expedition to the west. He was probably motivated more to protect his dynasty and place Honorius on the western throne rather than any sense of avenging Valentinian. This time he brought Timasius, a veteran from fighting Maximus, along with Stilicho, who had risen to a position of eminence in the eastern army.⁴⁷⁴ Theodosius planned for Richomeres to also participate, but he died of disease before the campaign began.⁴⁷⁵ It does not seem he was immediately replaced, which left Addaeus and Abundantius in charge of the eastern Empire's military affairs.⁴⁷⁶ Even though Arcadius was not only a full Augustus but an adult, Theodosius still left Rufinus to watch over and protect him.

The two armies met at the Frigidus River in early September 394. On the second day of battle, a powerful bora wind blew into the western army's lines, blinding them and causing their missiles to be pushed back onto themselves.⁴⁷⁷ This advantage allowed the east to crushingly defeat the western army, and Eugenius was captured and executed.⁴⁷⁸ Arbogast fled to the mountains where he committed suicide two days later.⁴⁷⁹

⁴⁷³ Szidat 1979, 492.

⁴⁷⁴ Zos. 4.57.2 also says that in command of Theodosius' barbarian allies were Gainas, Saul, and Bacurius. Joh. Ant. fr. 187 only records Gainas and Saul as barbarian commanders. These men are potentially *magistri*, but unlikely to be so. Of Saul, nothing more is known, although Zos. 4.58.2-3 indicates he survived the campaign. Bacurius was identified as a *comes domesticorum* by Ruf. HE 1.11, and it would be entirely possible for him to be brought on the campaign and be praised by Lib. Ep. 1060 in that rank rather than as a *magister militum*. The best method of deduction is an understanding of Gainas' career. He is ranked as a *comes* by Jord. Rom. 319, 320, as well as Marcell. com. s.a. 395 and 399, and in 395 he took orders from the *magister militum* Stilicho, indicating he was subservient and a lower rank (Zos. 5.7.4-6; Philost. HE 11.8; Joh. Ant. fr. 190, Marcell. com. s.a. 395; Jord. Rom. 319). Additionally, in 399 he was frustrated at not receiving more honours (Zos. 5.13.1-2, 17.4; Eun. fr. 67.10; Marcell. com. s.a. 399), and he was promoted to the *magisterium* later that year (Soz. 8.4.5; cf. Theod. HE 5.32.1). All these things indicate that Gainas was not a *magister militum* in 394, and if he was equivalent in rank to Saul and Bacurius, then, in the absence of any evidence to the contrary, we can assume that none of these barbarian commanders were *magistri* during the 394 campaign.

⁴⁷⁵ Joh. Ant. fr. 187; Zos. 4.55.2-3.

⁴⁷⁶ Seeck and Demandt theorised that Moderatus may have also been a *magister militum* in the east around this time, but it is more likely that he was only a *tribunus* (Seeck 1906b, 213; Demandt 1970, 711; PLRE 605).

⁴⁷⁷ Oros. 7.35.17; Soz. 7.24; Ruf. HE 2.33. Zos. 4.58.4 once again chalks this victory up to the over-eating and laziness of the losing side.

⁴⁷⁸ Zos. 4.58.5; Oros. 7.35.19; Soz. 7.24; Ruf. HE 2.33; Philost. HE 11.2.

⁴⁷⁹ Zos. 4.58.6; Oros. 7.35.19; Soz. 7.24; Philost. HE 11.2; Claud. III cons. Hon. 102-5, IV con. Hon. 91-93; Sid. Ap. carm. 5.354-56.

Theodosius once again proceeded to Italy to stabilise the west. He intended to leave the ten-year old Honorius as Augustus there when he returned to Constantinople, and to oversee the young emperor he officially appointed Stilicho as a 'regent', or controlling guardian.⁴⁸⁰ Thus, despite Arbogast dominating and perhaps murdering Valentinian from a similar position, Theodosius still felt that it was *magistri* who could safeguard the western Empire. Any doubts must have been assuaged by Stilicho's relation to the imperial family by marriage and the fact that he was personally well known to Theodosius himself, and probably prohibited from becoming emperor because of his barbarian heritage. However, not long after this decision, and well before he could ensure the stability of the regime of his youngest son, Theodosius fell fatally ill.⁴⁸¹ After his death, ten-year old Honorius and eighteen-year old Arcadius were left as emperors, but the Empire was in the hands of their controllers, Stilicho and Rufinus.

In this Chapter, we have witnessed an increasing concentration of power into the hands of the *magistri*. After the disaster of Julian's invasion of Persia, emperor Valens initially struggled to manage the military pressures in the east, including usurpation and proxy wars in Armenia, while being restricted, or restricting himself, to only two *magistri*. At the same time, Valentinian raised the official status of the *magistri militum* and gave them greater license by allowing them to manage the armies and conduct operations at times without his direct oversight and as far away as Africa. His death in 375 afforded the chance for the *magister militum* Merobaudes to manipulate the imperial office for his own benefit, and this was the first time the *magistri* became veritable king-creators. The outbreak of the Gothic crisis saw a massive expansion in the *magisterium*, with eight *magistri* operating along the Danube within only four years. The nature of the eastern and western *magisterium* diverged over the following decade. Theodosius at first reduced the number of eastern *magistri*, but then expanded their numbers in the face of increasing pressure, including two civil wars with the west. A strong emperor and powerful Praetorian Prefect were also able to inhibit the power of these eastern *magistri*. Conversely, in the west, a series of *magistri* gained increasing degrees of power by dominating the weak emperor Valentinian II. The importance of these men was so great that Theodosius appointed Stilicho to serve as a 'regent' over the young emperor Honorius, setting another strong precedent for the continued domination of the *magistri*.

⁴⁸⁰ Zos. 4.59.1, 5.1.1-4; Oros. 7.37.1; Joh. Ant. fr. 188, 190; Eun. fr. 62.1-2; Philost. *HE* 11.3; Claud. *III cons. Hon.* 142-62. For modern discussions of this episode, see: Cameron 1969, 269; McEvoy 2013, 142. McEvoy 2013, 9-12, points out that the Roman Empire had no official position called regent or the like, however the word is still mostly useful for our purposes.

⁴⁸¹ *Cons. Const. s.a.* 379; *Chron. Edess.* 39; Soc. 6.1.1; Theod. *HE* 5.25.2.

Chapter Three: The Prosopography of the *Magistri Militum*

Chapters One and Two have chronologically followed the *magistri militum*'s recorded activities up to 395, highlighting the key events that shaped the nature of their office. This Chapter will take a different approach by conducting a prosopographical investigation of these same *magistri*. Prosopography is the inverse of biography; whereas the latter examines one particularly unique person and details the important characteristics and events of their life, prosopography poses questions to a group in order to delineate and understand the norms and averages of the individuals within the group.⁴⁸² This study will thus broadly explore the nature and character of the *magistri* through statistical analyses, which will ensure equal focus is afforded to each general. In addition, discussions of outliers and smaller groups of *magistri* with shared characteristics, will combine with the previously established narrative to further illuminate how decisive moments in the fourth century changed the position and power of the *magisterium*.

Prosopography desires several elements to be successful. The first is a well-defined population to study.⁴⁸³ In Chapters One and Two, the evidence for why we should identify potential individuals as a *magister militum* or not was considered. Most *magistri* have their title recorded in sources like the *Res Gestae* or the *Codex Theodosianus*. However, others are recorded by sources that do not preserve their title, often because they are written in Greek, but sometimes also in Latin sources that do not use technical terms. Other contextual information, especially the granting of a consulship, can be used as supplementary evidence in these cases. Using this method, this thesis reached the number of fifty-two recorded *magistri* from the decades before the death of Theodosius I in 395. This is a lower total than that used by previous scholars, as it has tended to be critical and exclusionary rather than widely inclusive. While this approach runs the risk of discounting some individuals who did reach the *magisterium*, it should not dramatically affect the prosopographical results, as many of the excluded individuals are those about whom the least information is known. Even still, there are three *magistri* that offer no useful information for this prosopographical discussion, and fit into the 'unknown' categories for each topic.⁴⁸⁴

⁴⁸² On this method, see: Verboven, Carlier, and Dumolyn 2007.

⁴⁸³ Verboven, Carlier, and Dumolyn 2007, 47.

⁴⁸⁴ These are Andragathius, Majorianus, and Quintinus.

The other important element prosopography requires is detailed information about the people in the examined population.⁴⁸⁵ Prosopographers are often able to utilise a much deeper volume of information than is available for the fourth century. Thus, while some prosopographies can construct databases with a multitude of questions accurately answered for hundreds of people, we will be limited to only three questions, but as much detail and analysis as is possible will be offered. However, even a lack of information can be used constructively. For example, the first topic in this Chapter will be the distribution of the religious beliefs of the *magistri*. There is surprisingly very little information in the sources about this topic, even though the beliefs of the *magistri* must have been known to contemporaries, especially those who knew them personally, such as Ammianus or Libanius. Hence, we will investigate why this lacuna exists. The second topic will be a description and explanation of the unique fourth century career path that led one through the military ranks of the late Roman army to the office of *magister militum*. Establishing this hierarchy of offices will help us understand the nature of the late Roman army administration and the offices that composed it. This will be the first time (to my knowledge) that either of these questions will be discussed for all the *magistri militum* of the fourth century. The third and final prosopographical topic, however, has been previously visited by scholars, although the two previous studies have either not been comprehensive or have used flawed methodology. Therefore, in the third section which will examine the ethnic identities of the *magistri*, this thesis will review the previous research and discuss the improvements that can be made to ensure we obtain more accurate results. This topic will lead into a discourse regarding the effects of ethnicity in the developments of the *magisterium*. We will see that a small subset of the most powerful *magistri* had a number of characteristics in common that may have encouraged them to reach these heights of powers. The statistics for each question will be presented with accompanying graphs, and then to conclude any final considerations that can be drawn from the results will be presented.

⁴⁸⁵ Verboven, Carlier, and Dumolyn 2007, 46.

3.1 The Religious Beliefs of the *Magistri Militum*

3.1.1 Introduction

The fourth century was a tumultuous and extremely important period for religious history. Early in the century, Christianity endured extreme persecution by the state, only to replace Greco-Roman paganism as the Empire's dominant religion by the end of the period. Furthermore, the religious role of the emperors became significantly more pronounced, and religious rhetoric and ceremony played a key part in the acceptance of the new child-emperors.

In the late third century, an attempt was made to purge the army of Christians.⁴⁸⁶ In 303, emperor Diocletian, at the urging of emperor Galerius, further enacted the most severe persecutions Christians had ever faced.⁴⁸⁷ Across the Empire, but especially in the east, Christians suffered the destruction of their churches, the burning of scriptures, and seizure of property. Additionally, all Christians were reduced to the legal status of *humiliores*, and were forced to make a sacrifice to the pagan gods before any court hearing.⁴⁸⁸ However, the persecution ended in the west around 306, and Galerius would proclaim the Edict of Toleration in 311, formally ending the persecutions and allowing Christians to worship in the Empire without being harmed, although the persecutions would last for another two years in the east under emperor Maximinus.⁴⁸⁹ The following year, after experiencing a dream he believed came from the Christian God, emperor Constantine I instructed his soldiers to bear the Christian Chi-Rho symbol on their shields, and in 313 the eastern emperor Licinius matched the already standing western policy of restoring previously seized Christian property.⁴⁹⁰ By the end of the century, Christianity would become the only state-sponsored religion of the Roman Empire.⁴⁹¹ This change ushered in a decline of paganism, and by 415 pagans would be formally excluded from military service.⁴⁹²

⁴⁸⁶ Barnes 1996, 542-52.

⁴⁸⁷ Eus. *HE* 8.13.10-11.

⁴⁸⁸ For a description of all this violence, see: Clarke 2005, 650-1.

⁴⁸⁹ Lact. *Mort. Pers.* 34-35; Corcoran 2012, 52.

⁴⁹⁰ Eus. *V. Const.* 28-32; cf. Lact. *Mort. Pers.* 44; Drake 2005, 121-23; 2009, 216; Lenski 2017, 27; Barnes 2014, 74-80, 93-97.

⁴⁹¹ *CTh* 16.10.21; Chadwick 1997. For a discussion on the way in which the Empire Christianised, see: Barnes 1995.

⁴⁹² Stoll 2007, 471-73.

Christianity experienced multiple schisms, heresies, and theological disputes during this period of growth, which in some cases, such as the Donatist movement, were directly related to the previous era of persecution and martyrdom. Chapters One and Two of this thesis described multiple episodes where the *magistri* were involved in these religious events and affairs: Salia escorted the western bishops sent to restore Athanasius to Alexandria, Bauto and Rumoridus were involved in the debate over the Altar of Victory, and Addaeus and Timasius gave advice on the Callinicum synagogue-burning incident in 388, among others events.⁴⁹³ These were mostly tasks carried out on the orders of the emperors or related to the official duties of the *magistri*, but they also became involved on a more personal level. For example, Modares was persuaded to provide his opinion during the First Council of Constantinople.⁴⁹⁴ Clearly, the *magistri* were heavily involved in the religious affairs of the Roman world.

The *magistri* might have also been involved in changing the traditional, military image of the Roman emperors to a more religious, ceremonial role in order to make the reigns of the new child-emperors more acceptable. This new image sharply contrasted with the conventional depiction of the ideal Roman emperor. Writing in the late third century, Menander Rhetor identified the important elements that were to comprise the portrayal of a good emperor.⁴⁹⁵ Having a respected family and an education, as well as being just, pious, and moral were all important, but perhaps the single most crucial aspect was military prowess and strength.⁴⁹⁶ Of course, not all emperors were exceptional warriors or strategists, but the imperial image was built upon the idea that they could be.⁴⁹⁷ We can also see the portrayal of some fourth century adult emperors in this manner. For example, Ammianus praises Constantius II's use of javelin and bow, and he writes that Julian inspired his soldiers through his brave deeds.⁴⁹⁸

Even when an emperor was not militarily experienced or capable, they would often still accompany the army and take nominal command. For example, Elagabalus (218-222) was declared emperor at only fourteen years of age and had had the career of a priest, not a soldier.⁴⁹⁹ Yet he was

⁴⁹³ For Salia, see pages 24-25. For Bauto and Rumoridus, see pages 100-1. For Addaeus and Timasius: *CTh* 16.8.9; *Amb. Ep.* 41.27.

⁴⁹⁴ See page 72.

⁴⁹⁵ Russell and Wilson 1981, xxxiv-xl. For a discussion of the difficulties that stem from the nature of the kind of works Menander wrote, see: McEvoy 2013, 24-26.

⁴⁹⁶ Menander 371.29-372.2, 375.5-13; 375.24-376.9.

⁴⁹⁷ McEvoy 2013, 29.

⁴⁹⁸ *AM*, 16.2.11-13, 12.39-41, 21.16.7.

⁴⁹⁹ Arrizabalaga y Prado 2010, 162-205.

still present and seemingly leading his soldiers as they fought for primacy against Macrinus – although their loyalty would not last long.⁵⁰⁰ Closer to our time period, we have seen that even though he did not have a military education, emperor Valens actively led his soldiers at every opportunity.⁵⁰¹

No one could be fooled, however, into believing that an eight- or four-year old child-emperor could take to the battlefield and fulfill the military duties of his office. Instead, the idea of youthful promise was emphasised: the young Gratian and Valentinian II would be excellent commanders some day in the future.⁵⁰² In the interim, however, the role of the emperor was redefined to have a greater emphasis on religion. Since Constantine I had offered his support to Christianity, Roman emperors had developed a more active religious role by convening ecumenical councils, ordaining and removing bishops, and weighing in on theological disputes.⁵⁰³ This role became the one Gratian, and especially Valentinian II, could best exemplify. Personal piety, religious commitment, and the promotion of a united faith became their most valued characteristics, with the likes of bishop Ambrose lauding the imperial virtues of piety and gentleness, and praising Valentinian for being more mild than a lamb.⁵⁰⁴ The imagery of St. Peter and St. Paul was also invoked to reinforce the “corporate image” of the Theodosian dynasty, stabilising their monopolization of power via the ideal of *concordia*.⁵⁰⁵ Military depictions did not entirely disappear for the emperors, as can be seen on the diptych of Probus, which shows Honorius in armour holding a spear.⁵⁰⁶ However, Ambrose also wrote that Valentinian’s self-control and meekness protected Italy from the depredations of Magnus Maximus.⁵⁰⁷ Thus, in quite a stark reversal, imperial passivity became a virtue.

The bishop Ambrose is most often identified as one of the primary drivers behind this development, along with other officials and advisors, such as Symmachus or Anicius Auchenius Bassus, or even imperial family members, such as Justina, Valentinian II’s mother.⁵⁰⁸ It is also often

⁵⁰⁰ Herod. 5.4.5, 4.8.

⁵⁰¹ See Chapter 2.2.

⁵⁰² McEvoy 2013, 109-10.

⁵⁰³ McEvoy 2013, 40-43.

⁵⁰⁴ Amb. *De ob. Val. Iun.* 74, 79; McEvoy 2013, 117-27.

⁵⁰⁵ Dal Santo 2015.

⁵⁰⁶ McEvoy 2013, 18.

⁵⁰⁷ McEvoy 2013, 128.

⁵⁰⁸ McEvoy 2013, 119-25; Errington 2006, 200; Testa 2007, 262; McLynn 1994, 151; Potter 2004, 560-61.

credited to many unnamed “emperor’s advisers”.⁵⁰⁹ It is not always exactly clear who these advisers are; late Roman courts were densely populated with eunuchs, bureaucrats, and guardsmen who could exert influence on the emperor in a myriad of forms. One group that has often been dismissed or excluded from these discussions are the *magistri militum*, even though they were some of the most powerful individuals in the late fourth century.⁵¹⁰ Significantly, the *magistri* probably had the most to gain if the emperors were reduced to ceremonial duties and military command was permanently shifted out of their control. We have already seen how Merobaudes treasonously contravened Gratian’s orders to the Gallic army, and how Valentinian II was continuously sidelined by Arbogast. It thus seems likely that the *magistri* were deeply involved in removing the emperors from their traditional military role, yet they still often only feature in a minor way in analyses of late fourth century religious developments.

One exception is Raban von Haeling’s work on the religious beliefs of late Roman officials.⁵¹¹ Haeling uses the prosopographical method to understand the role of religion in the appointment of officials, and concludes that the percentage of Christians in high offices increased significantly and sharply during the final quarter of the fourth-century.⁵¹² Doubt has been cast, however, on the validity of Haeling’s conclusions because of flaws in his methodology.⁵¹³ Although not incorrect, the Christianisation of high office was not as abrupt nor as late as Haeling proposes. Nonetheless, his discussion of the evidence, and his judgments on the beliefs of the *magistri*, remain an important part of the scholarship and provides a useful comparison for this study.

3.1.2 Survey

The religious beliefs of the *magistri militum* are unfortunately mostly obscured due to the lack of conclusive evidence. Rather than the detail that is required for good prosopography, very little information is preserved about magisterial religious beliefs. Furthermore, much of the data is

⁵⁰⁹ McEvoy 2013, 125.

⁵¹⁰ For example, in Cameron’s 2011 reassessment of fourth century paganism claims that it was chiefly three civilian aristocrats and the emperor Eugenius who were the strident pagans during the late fourth century. Cameron 2011, 59, argues that Arbogast was actually a Christian, and that there is “no doubt” he was the denier of the Altar of Victory restoration petition that came to Vienne in 392. For the flaws in Cameron’s argument on Arbogast’s religious beliefs, see page 100-1.

⁵¹¹ Haeling 1978.

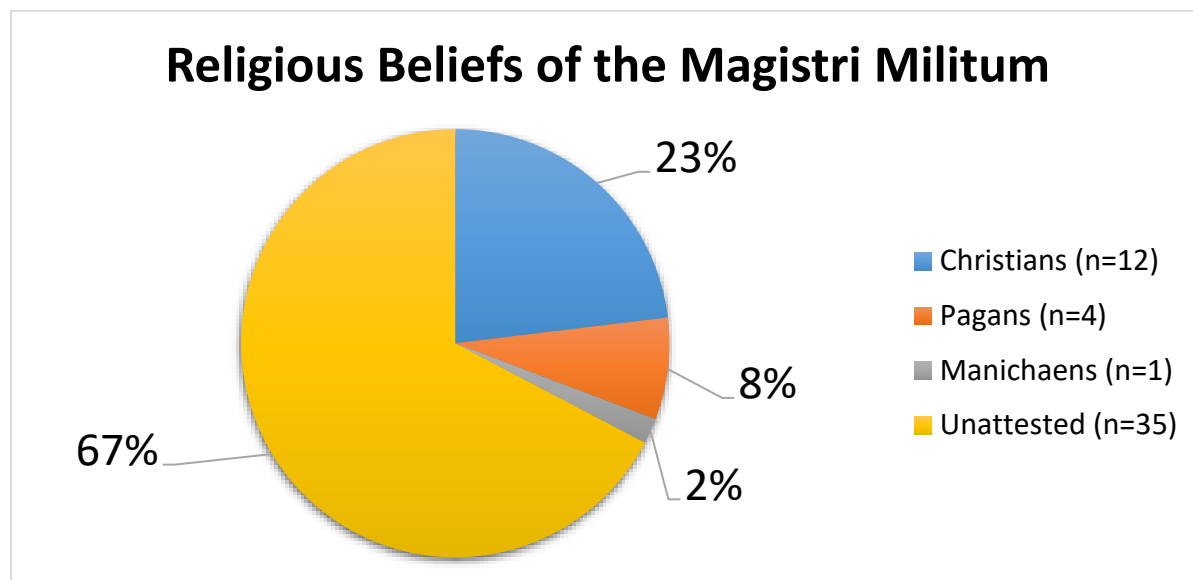
⁵¹² Haeling 1978, 507, 614-18.

⁵¹³ Barnes 1995.

only deduced through inference and is consequently uncertain. Therefore, this section will focus on possible explanations for why the information is so sorely lacking, and only offer careful conclusions on what the data might tell us.

The recorded *magistri militum* that appear before 395 and have a religious affiliation known with certainty or with great confidence can be found listed in Table One. Doubts about those in this table, and a discussion of why some have been excluded, will appear below. A display of the *magistri* in each religious group can be found in Figure One, which shows that over two-thirds of the *magistri* do not have religious beliefs that can be confidently identified. This is a surprisingly high number when they all would have had some sort of religious affiliation. We can see that twelve are known with confidence to have been Christians, and one was a Manichean. The greatest surprise is that only four *magistri* are explicitly said to have been pagans. Although the number of pagans was reducing across the Empire, the religion still had many followers across the Roman government, and the army especially remained a lasting pagan holdout.⁵¹⁴ Thus it would be expected that a significant number of the unknown generals were pagans. We might also have expected to find more pagans in the earlier part of the century, when the religion had a greater number of adherents. However, as shown in Figure Two, all four pagan *magistri* appear after 380, at a time when the Roman Empire was more Christianised than ever.

Figure One. The Percentages of Religious Beliefs of the *Magistri Militum*.



⁵¹⁴ Stoll 2007, 471-73.

Table One. The *Magistri Militum* with Known Religious Beliefs.

Arbogast	Pagan	Arinthaesus	Christian
Bauto	Pagan	Flavius Theodosius	Christian
Jovinus	Christian	Lupicinus	Christian
Modares	Christian	Richomeres	Pagan
Rumoridus	Pagan	Salia	Christian
Saturninus	Christian	Sebastianus	Manichean
Stilicho	Christian	Theodosius	Christian
Timasius	Christian	Traianus	Christian
Victor	Christian		

3.1.3 Discussion

The above is clearly an incomplete dataset, and information about the beliefs of many of the *magistri* is absent. In Chapter 3.3, it will be discussed how there are several methods we can use to extrapolate more information about the ethnicities of the *magistri* than would otherwise be available. Unfortunately, there are significant problems with almost all methods of making similar extrapolations when it comes to religious beliefs. For example, Haeling theorises that emperors would discriminate against those who did not share their own beliefs. On this basis alone, he concludes that Julian's most trusted officers that he appointed to effectuate his rebellion, namely Nevitta, Dagalaifus, and Jovinus, must have all been pagans.⁵¹⁵ Haeling even goes as far as arguing that Jovinus, who built a church in Rheims and is therefore conclusively a Christian in his later

⁵¹⁵ Haeling 1978, 239, 250-51, 253.

years, must have been a pagan under Julian and converted to demonstrate his trustworthiness to Jovian.⁵¹⁶ However, this does not take into account Julian's apparent comfort with employing Christians in other high military ranks, such as Victor and Arinthaëus. Similarly, while emperor Theodosius was a strident Christian, the pagan Richomeres was one of his most privileged and highest-ranking generals, and he also did not discriminate against Arbogast's paganism. These things indicate that the emperors were not restricted to employing only *magistri* who shared their beliefs, and thus I do not find Haeling's conclusions on Julian's generals to be convincing.

Another method of inference is based on a *magister's* involvement in certain operations and tasks, but there are also difficulties in this approach. For example, Sapores was ordered by Gratian to restore Nicenean bishops in the east.⁵¹⁷ This mission might have been entrusted to Sapores because he was a Christian, but it would also be possible for a dutiful non-Christian *magister* to carry out the emperor's orders with equal competence.⁵¹⁸ Hence, this episode is inconclusive, and we must leave Sapores as unattested.

It has also been argued that it is possible to deduce religious beliefs through close-readings and alternate interpretations of the ancient sources. For example, Timothy Barnes believes Ammianus' descriptions of the *magister* Sabinianus spending time amongst the "tombs" of Edessa implied he liked to visit the churches of the Christian martyrs that were outside the city.⁵¹⁹ Although this seems convincing, Ammianus is not an impartial historian when it comes to Christianity or to Sabinianus. We should thus hesitate to state Sabinianus' religion with confidence.

⁵¹⁶ Haeling 1978, 250-51.

⁵¹⁷ See page 72.

⁵¹⁸ Haeling 1978, 37-38.

⁵¹⁹ Barnes 1998, 85-86, discussing AM 18.7.7.

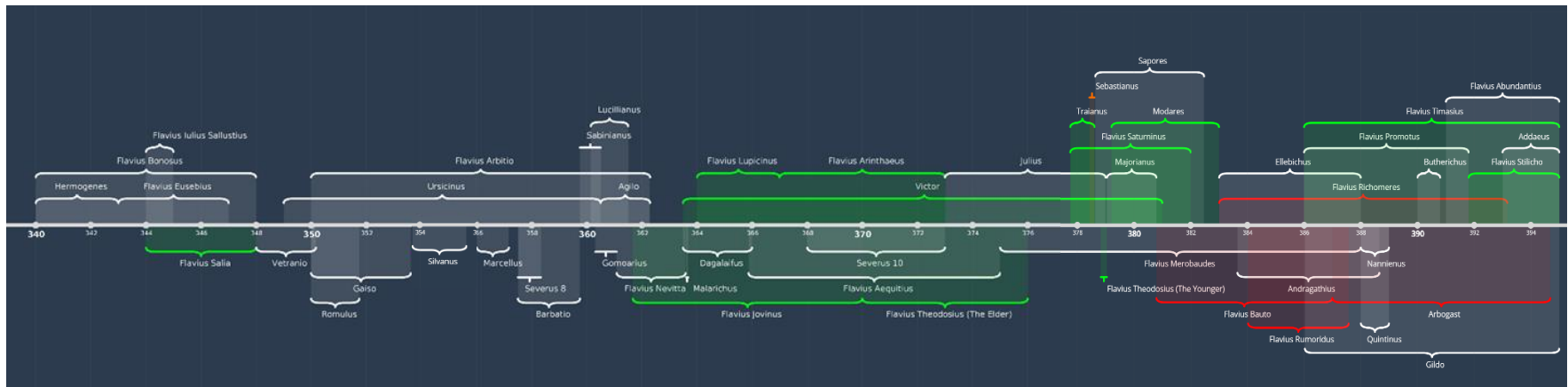


Figure Two. The Religion of the *Magistri* in the Fourth Century. White indicates no information available, green indicates Christian beliefs, red indicates pagan beliefs, and orange indicates Manicheanism. Names above the centre white line indicate those who served mostly or entirely in the eastern Empire, and below the centre line served in the west. This representation is not intended to be perfectly accurate, because of course many *magistri* served in different halves of the Empire at different times, and as detailed in Chapters One and Two, there are uncertainties regarding the specific dates many served between. This figure is intended only to help showcase the relevant recorded information about magisterial religious beliefs.

Another avenue of inquiry might be to ascertain which individuals were praised by particular authors. On this basis, it might be safe to assume that Ursicinus, the hero of the pagan Ammianus, was also pagan. However, the pagan Libanius praises both Christian and pagan *magistri*.⁵²⁰ Despite his own beliefs, Libanius also developed friendships with Christians such as John Chrysostom and Basil of Caesarea.⁵²¹ Furthermore, Zosimus, following the writings of Eunapius, disliked the Christians and praised many pagans, including Bauto and Arbogast. However, Zosimus and Eunapius are also highly approbative of the Manichaean, Sebastianus, and the Christian emperor Theodosius.⁵²² Therefore, there cannot be absolute certainty that ancient authors limited their praise to only others of the same religion, and guesswork on determining their biases in these matters is inconclusive.

One problem is that pagan sources did not often record an individual's religion. For the *magistri*, pagan sources only clearly identify Richomeres as a pagan. Libanius writes that the *magister* begged to be his friend, and in the end they did become close: Richomeres convinced emperor Theodosius to summon Libanius to the capital in 384, where Libanius delivered a panegyric in Richomeres' honour.⁵²³ Another explanation for why fewer *magistri* are recorded as pagan is because, as the religion declined, so did events like public sacrifices, and therefore the pagan *magistri* lost the possibility of being recorded engaging in such activities.⁵²⁴ Furthermore, it has been theorised that some pagan authors, especially Ammianus, were restricted by the influence of the Christian emperors and other powerful Christian officials from praising pagans too thoroughly.⁵²⁵

While our pagan sources are generally quiet on magisterial religious beliefs, Christian sources are another matter entirely. A letter written by Basil of Caesarea identifies Arinthaëus as having been baptised, Orosius records the same for Flavius Theodosius, and Theodoret praises Salia's piety, amongst many more recordings.⁵²⁶ We do have to be aware, however, of potential biases in Christian sources giving evidence of non-Christian religious beliefs. For example,

⁵²⁰ Libanius' praise for the Christian Lupicinus: *Lib. Or.* 1.164-66. His praise for the pagan Richomeres: *Lib. Or.* 1.219-20.

⁵²¹ Waas 1971, 34.

⁵²² Zos. 4.16.6, 23.1-6, 24.4; Eun. fr. 44.3.

⁵²³ *Lib. Or.* 1.219-20; *Ep.* 1007.

⁵²⁴ Barnes 2010, 66.

⁵²⁵ Thompson 1947, 86.

⁵²⁶ Arinthaëus: *Bas. Ep.* 269. Flavius Theodosius: *Oros.* 7.33.7. Salia: *Theod. HE* 2.8.54.

Athanasius suffered persecution for his anti-Arian beliefs during his time in Egypt under the Arian emperor Constantius II. At the time, Sebastianus was the *dux* of Egypt and was responsible for overseeing some of the persecutions, and it is Athanasius who records him as a Manichean.⁵²⁷ Although there is no strong evidence that Athanasius is lying, we must remain conscious of the possibility.

Bauto, Rumoridus, and Arbogast were recorded as pagans by the Christian sources which chronicled the Altar of Victory debate. However, the evidence for Bauto's and Arbogast's religion is not entirely conclusive and has been the subject of some debate. After Symmachus requested that the restrictions on paganism be lifted by Valentinian II, Ambrose delivered a counter-speech in the imperial consistory, and Bauto and Rumoridus were in attendance.⁵²⁸ He then describes that the generals were devoted to paganism, but he uses singular terminology that only explicitly identifies Rumoridus as a pagan. Historians have tended to believe that Bauto was also a pagan, and that Ambrose's phrasing is either a mistake in the manuscripts or a particular choice to emphasise Rumoridus' religion for an unknown reason.⁵²⁹

Alan Cameron, however, argues that we should not correct Ambrose in this fashion and instead consider Bauto to have been a Christian, because he believes that Arbogast was a Christian. Arbogast is recorded as a pagan by both Orosius and Paulinus; however, because the former used the latter as a source, we only need to consider Paulinus.⁵³⁰ He writes that it was Arbogast and the Praetorian Prefect Flavianus who urged emperor Eugenius to restore the Altar of Victory.⁵³¹ Although Paulinus is generally considered trustworthy, Cameron disputes him on the basis that Arbogast is said to have been friends with the bishop Ambrose.⁵³² However, throughout his work, Cameron argues that Christians and pagans intermingled freely in the western court of the late Roman Empire, and that there were no sharp divisions. Thus, by his own logic, it should not come as a surprise that Arbogast was friends with Ambrose even if he was a pagan. Therefore, if we doubt Cameron's assertion that Arbogast was a Christian, we have no reason to follow his argument that

⁵²⁷ Athan. *Apol. De fuga* 6, *Hist. Ar.* 59, 61, 72; cf. Theod. *HE* 13-14.

⁵²⁸ Amb. *Ep.* 57.3.

⁵²⁹ Demandt 1970, 607-8; Rapisarda 1972, 27 n.22; Ruggini 1979, 10 n.13.

⁵³⁰ Cameron 2011, 85, discussing Oros. 7.35.12 and Paulin. *V. Amb.* 26. Also see: 104 n.30

⁵³¹ Paulin. *V. Amb.* 26.

⁵³² Paulin. *V. Amb.* 30. For Paulinus' trustworthiness, see: Deferrari 1953, 28.

Bauto was a Christian, and we should follow the testimony of the sources and consider them both to be pagans.⁵³³

Finally, a further complication to this matter is that the boundaries between different religious groups can be fluid, and the groups are not strictly defined. Haeling points out that within the category of 'Christian' there are those who have converted but not yet been baptized, as well as the orthodox and unorthodox.⁵³⁴ Similarly, 'pagan' refers to a multitude of polytheistic cults and beliefs that are not necessarily closely related. Thus, even with more information, dividing the *magistri* into religious groups would remain difficult.

Any conclusions drawn from such a limited dataset as this will inevitably be difficult to state with certainty. Nonetheless, the four pagans share several characteristics. Bauto, Richomeres, and Arbogast were all Franks, and Rumoridus is a Germanic name, and therefore it is likely that he was also Frankish, or perhaps a member of a different Germanic group.⁵³⁵ All four generals also originated from the western Empire.⁵³⁶ Therefore, it might be possible to assume that some of the other Germanic *magistri* serving in the west with presently unknown religions, of which there are seven on record, were also pagans.⁵³⁷ There are also four more eastern *magistri* with Germanic origins, who may potentially have a high chance of being pagan.⁵³⁸ However, both Stilicho and Salia were Germans and Christians, indicating that we cannot make conclusive deductions with this theory. The Christians are a more diverse group, with both barbarians and Romans in each half of the Empire, and so they are more difficult to broadly categorize.⁵³⁹ In the end, the lack of detail in the sources on this matter makes it impossible at this stage to construct a full and accurate analysis on the religious beliefs of the fourth century *magistri militum*. While the evidence we do have makes it certain that they were heavily involved in religious affairs in one of the most important periods of religious history, we do not have the required breadth to be more definitive.

⁵³³ Also cf. the discussion of the pagan Libanius' Christian friends on page 95.

⁵³⁴ Haeling 1978, 21-22.

⁵³⁵ Schönfeld 1911, 192-93.

⁵³⁶ Although Richomeres first became a *magister militum* in the east, he first appears as a western *comes domesticorum*.

⁵³⁷ These six Germans with unknown religions are Gaiso, Silvanus, Gomoarius, Nevitta, Malarichus, Dagalaifus, and Merobaudes.

⁵³⁸ These four Germans with unknown religions are Ursicinus, Agilo, Ellebichus, Butherichus.

⁵³⁹ For further discussion of ethnicity, see Chapter 3.3.

3.2 The Fourth Century Career Path and the Hierarchy of Military Offices

3.2.1 Introduction

Ambitious men of the later Roman Republic, the early Roman Empire, and of the Byzantine Empire – that is, the eastern Roman Empire which survived the dissolution of the western Empire in the fifth century – had to progress through a rather linear and rigid career path if they wanted to advance in Roman society. Whether civil, military, or a combination of both, academic descriptions of these hierarchies have contributed to a deeper understanding of the bureaucratic nature of the periods, as well as the officers that comprised them. The careers of men in the Republic and early Empire were often recorded epigraphically, and that has enabled the development of extensive studies that cover hundreds of individuals. Unfortunately, the popularity of these inscriptions ended in the third century, so the information for the *magistri* is more fragmentary.⁵⁴⁰ Furthermore, the smaller population – only fifty-two *magistri* are examined here – makes drawing conclusions more difficult. Nonetheless, a study on the Germanic officers of the fourth century has already been conducted by Manfred Waas.⁵⁴¹ Expanding our view to consider all the attested *magistri* of the fourth century will allow us to more conclusively reveal both the hierarchy of different military offices, and the normal career progression that brought an individual to the rank of *magister militum*. Analyses of why particular offices were likely to see promotion to the *magisterium*, as well as why certain individuals received more rapid advancement, will further elucidate the nature of the *magistri*.

Firstly, it is important to place the fourth century in the context of other known Roman career paths, and seek to uncover the ways in which the magisterial path was similar or different. During the later Republic and early Empire, an aspiring Roman senator would seek to progress through the *cursus honorum*. This hierarchy would see one climb through positions such as *quaestor*, *aedile*, and *praetor*, and would peak at some of the most powerful offices in the Roman

⁵⁴⁰ Borg and Witschel 2001.

⁵⁴¹ Waas 1971, 5-10.

world, such as a provincial governorship.⁵⁴² The early imperial army had no dedicated generals; senators commanded individual legions, but the combined armies fell under the command of governors. However, at times the emperors needed to grant extraordinary commands, and senators like Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa, Germanicus, Gnaeus Domitius Corbulo, and Gaius Avidius Cassius, to name only a few, commanded combined field armies across entire theatres of war.⁵⁴³ Although these positions were temporary, the scope of their military commands was similar to that of the *magistri*. However, all these senatorial positions were unpaid.⁵⁴⁴ While we do not know the extent of remuneration in the fourth century, the *magistri* and other army officers were paid from the imperial treasury.⁵⁴⁵ Furthermore, the *cursus honorum* was generally strictly ordained: one could not hold an office without having first held those which preceded it, and there were age restrictions upon the offices, although a specific order from the emperor could allow one to circumvent these restrictions.⁵⁴⁶ The career path that appears in the late Roman military administration was not quite as entrenched; we will see below that it was possible for some officers to skip certain rungs entirely, although this did not go uncriticised by contemporaries.⁵⁴⁷

The *equites Romani* had separate careers paths to the senators during the Republic and early Empire. The first of their paths, known as the *militiae equestres*, or the *tres militiae* for its three main offices, would see an *eques* begin as a prefect of a cohort, followed by a posting as a military tribune, and then they would finish as the prefect of an *ala* of cavalry.⁵⁴⁸ Under emperor Hadrian (117-138) command of an *ala milliaria*, a double-strength unit of cavalry, was added as a fourth rung, but because of the funnel-shaped hierarchy, few made it this far.⁵⁴⁹ In the other equestrian career path, an *eques* could seek employment as a centurion *ex equite Romano*. This path could result in the *eques* occupying very significant positions, including tribunates in the *vigiles*, urban cohorts, Praetorian Guard, or even the *equites singulares*.⁵⁵⁰ For the most ambitious equestrians, the highest positions they could aim for were the prefectures of the fleets, procuratorships, and at the highest point, the prefectures of the Praetorian Guard, Egypt, the

⁵⁴² Talbert 1996, 340-41.

⁵⁴³ See note 70.

⁵⁴⁴ Although senatorial governorships were remunerated. See: Davenport 2019, 302

⁵⁴⁵ Zos. 4.27.2; Lee 2015, 105-7.

⁵⁴⁶ A. R. Birley 1981, 4-35; Talbert 1984, 16-27; Davenport 2019, 302.

⁵⁴⁷ AM 20.2.5. Although some believe Ammianus said this because he disliked Agilo's barbarian background: Stroheker 1961, 128.

⁵⁴⁸ Goldsworthy 2003, 65-66; Talbert 1996, 340; Davenport 2019, 261-62.

⁵⁴⁹ Davenport 2019, 261; Devijver 1999, 241.

⁵⁵⁰ Dobson 1974, 399-403; 1978, 68-87

Annona, and the *vigiles*.⁵⁵¹ Like the fourth century *magistri*, the equestrian positions were remunerated.⁵⁵² However, the major difference was that the equestrian positions were generally much lower in the military hierarchy than the *magisterium*. While the Praetorian Prefect, at times, functioned as the commander of field armies, generally equestrians were in ranks below the senators.⁵⁵³ The *militiae equestres* would have an equestrian finish with the command of a single unit, whereas the *magistri* were the commanders of entire armies and theatres of war.

The fourth century career path thus had differences and similarities with both the senatorial and equestrian careers. Another important distinction is that both the earlier career paths served *domi militiaeque* – they combined civil and military service.⁵⁵⁴ Approximately 85% of equestrians civil procurators had previously served in the military.⁵⁵⁵ However, the reforms of the late third and early fourth centuries ended *domi militiaeque* service. As described in Chapter One, military posts were given to equestrians, and the new *protectores* corps opened up this status to any soldier.⁵⁵⁶ At the same time, the civil posts previously occupied by equestrians were transferred to senators.⁵⁵⁷ Even though the civil and military administrations of the fourth century were combined into a single, unified hierarchy with senatorial status in 372, the two career paths were not interchangeable, and there was no moving between the two systems.⁵⁵⁸

The fourth century military career is closely related to that of the sixth century Byzantine Empire. The army retained the same disposition of frontier forces and internal field armies commanded by *magistri militum*, although because of the prevalence of Greek sources, their positions are often preserved only with non-technical terms like στρατηγός or ἄρχων.⁵⁵⁹ The personal power of the *magistri militum* was also somewhat enhanced through the employment of *bucellarii*, new bodyguard units that directly served the generals.⁵⁶⁰ But overall, the early Byzantine Empire continued to utilise its army and officers in the same way developed in the late fourth

⁵⁵¹ Davenport 2019, 303.

⁵⁵² Cheesman 1914, 35-45, 90-101; Davenport 2019, 270 n.104, 276, 302.

⁵⁵³ Davenport 2019, 524-26.

⁵⁵⁴ For example, see: *CIL* III 6687 = *ILS* 2683; *AE* 1930, 121; 1954, 104. Davenport 2019, 316-17. For this term, see: Drogula 2015, 47-56.

⁵⁵⁵ Davenport 2019, 311.

⁵⁵⁶ See pages 23.

⁵⁵⁷ Davenport 2019, 545, 575-91.

⁵⁵⁸ *CTh* 6.7.1, 9.1, 11.1, 14.1, 22.4; Jones 1964, 142-44; Schmidt-Hofner 2008, 103-16.

⁵⁵⁹ Parnell 2017, 14, 21-23.

⁵⁶⁰ Parnell 2017, 17-18.

century eastern Roman Empire. This closeness indicates that, when compared to the late third and early fourth centuries, the fifth century was not one of extreme military innovation and reform.

3.2.2 Survey

Table Two displays the results of the research conducted on the fourth century military career path. There seems to have been two groups of offices which comprised the rungs that preceded the position of *magister militum*, and then the consulship made an additional final rung. We will visit each of these in successive order, but first it is pertinent to explain the 'Unspecified Officers' column of the table. These individuals were recorded as officers in the army, but the sources failed to preserve their precise rank. These mentions appear mostly as references to long and extensive military careers, or a general having risen through the ranks, and are often given as part of a brief description of the background of a prominent *magister militum*.⁵⁶¹ References also come from records of officers participating in Roman wars without exact mentions of their position and rank, such as Arinthaëus, Victor, and Hormisdas on the Persian expedition.⁵⁶² In many of these cases it would be possible to speculatively assign a position to them, such as *tribunus* or *comes rei militaris*, but this kind of supposition would only serve to make this study inaccurate, and so it has not been attempted. Nevertheless, while this category does not contribute to the reconstruction of the magisterial career path, it does confirm that at least thirty-eight *magistri* had military careers. Although some individuals, such as Sabinianus or Victor, seem to have been *magistri* because of their diplomatic rather than military skills, there is no indication they had civil backgrounds or careers.⁵⁶³ Thus this was a strictly military hierarchy.

⁵⁶¹ I.e. Zos. 5.10.5.

⁵⁶² See pages 47-48.

⁵⁶³ A conclusion supported by the statement at AM 21.16.3.

Table Two. The Offices Held by the *Magistri Militum*.

	<u>Unspecified Officers (14)</u>	<u>First Rung (13)</u>	<u>Second Rung (13)</u>	<u>Third Rung (Magister Militum)⁵⁶⁴</u>	<u>Consulship (19)</u>
Abundantius	Unspecified Officer			391 - 396	393
Addaeus			Comes Domesticorum	391 - 396	
Aequitius		Tribunus Scholae Primae Scutariorum	Comes Rei Militaris	365 - 375	374
Agilo		Tribunus Stabuli, Tribunus Gentilium et Scutariorum		360 - 362	
Arbitio		Dux ⁵⁶⁵		350 - 362	355
Arbogast	Unspecified Officer			387 - 394	
Arinthaesus		Tribunus Armaturae		367 - 373	372
Barbatio			Comes Domesticorum	357 - 359	
Bauto				380 - 386	385
Dagalaifus			Comes Domesticorum	363 - 366	366
Eusebius				343 - 347	347
Gaiso				349 - 353	351
Gildo	Unspecified Officer			386 - 398	
Gomoarius		Tribunus Scholae Scutariorum		361 - 362	
Jovinus	Unspecified Officer			361 - 369	367
Julius			Comes Rei Militaris	373 - 378	
Lucillianus	Unspecified Officer		Comes Domesticorum	360 - 361	
Lupicinus				359 - 361	367
Malarichus		Tribunus Gentilium		363	
Merobaudes	Unspecified Officer			375 - 383	377, 383, (388)
Nannienus			Comes Rei Militaris	388	
Nevitta		Praepositus		361 - 363	362

⁵⁶⁴ All dates are only a rough guide, and not meant to be definitive.

⁵⁶⁵ Began career as a common soldier and therefore may have held a lower rank at an unrecorded time.

Promotus	Unspecified Officer			386 – 391	389
Richomeres			Comes Domesticorum	383 – 393	384
Salia				344 – 347	348
Sallustius				344	344
Saturninus	Unspecified Officer	Cura Palatii	Comes Rei Militaris	377 – 382	383
Sebastianus		Dux	Comes Rei Militaris	378	
Severus 10			Comes Domesticorum	368 – 372	
Silvanus		Tribunus Scholae Armaturarum		353 – 355	
Stilicho		Tribunus Praetorianus Militaris, Comes Sacri Stabuli ⁵⁶⁶	Comes Domesticorum	391 – 408	
Flavius Theodosius	Unspecified Officer ⁵⁶⁷			370 – 375	
Theodosius	Unspecified Officer	Dux ⁵⁶⁸		378 – 379	
Timasius	Unspecified Officer			388 – 395	389
Traianus		Dux	Comes Rei Militaris	377 – 378	
Ursicinus	Unspecified Officer			349 – 359	
Vetranio	Unspecified Officer ⁵⁶⁹			348 – 350	
Victor	Unspecified Officer ⁵⁷⁰			363 – 380	369

⁵⁶⁶ This position probably served similar or even the same function as the *tribunus sacri stabuli* but was upgraded with the title *comes*. Perhaps this means the position should be considered to be one tier higher, or perhaps it was somewhere in between the two tiers. Without more information on the role of the position or the changes to it that came with the *comes* title, it is impossible to determine conclusively.

⁵⁶⁷ Called a *dux* by AM 27.8.6, but this does not seem like a technical usage because he also uses the term to refer to one of Theodosius' direct subordinates, Dulcitus. Therefore we might assume that Flavius Theodosius was a *comes rei militaris* if a *dux* was below him, but it is also possible that Flavius Theodosius was a *dux* and Dulcitus was actually an even lower rank, and so we must leave Flavius Theodosius in the unspecified column.

⁵⁶⁸ Unclear exactly what Theodosius' rank was when he was recalled into service in 378, but it seems unlikely that he would have been in a position lower than his previous rank of *dux*.

⁵⁶⁹ This comes from his reported extensive experience.

⁵⁷⁰ Called both a *dux* and a *comes* by Ammianus.

When classifying the *magistri* into groups, it is apparent that almost all the *magistri* are first recorded in quite high ranks. Arbitio is the only individual that is said to have risen from the lowest ranks of the soldiery, and seeing as how Ammianus appears to have painted Arbitio in an exaggeratedly negative light, we should be careful in accepting this too readily.⁵⁷¹ One reason that we are unaware of the *magistri* occupying low ranks is probably because they were able to skip those positions. Wealthy and aristocratic individuals, or individuals with fathers who distinguished themselves in the military, were able to begin their careers as officers, often at the rank of *protector domesticus*, therefore bypassing the lower ranks altogether.⁵⁷² Additionally, *magistri* born outside the Empire may have gained experience commanding their native group's armies, and this could have enabled them to also skip the lower rungs.⁵⁷³

Because of this, the first firmly attested rung of the magisterial hierarchy is a multitude of positions that had quite important duties in the Roman army. This group includes the *curae palatii*, *comites* or *tribuni sacri stabuli*, *praepositi*, *duces*, and, most commonly, the *tribuni*.⁵⁷⁴ One quarter of the fourth century *magistri* are attested as having attained ranks in this group. Multiple usurpers and emperors came from these ranks, most prominently Valentinian and Valens, demonstrating the importance of these offices.⁵⁷⁵ The *tribuni* commanded the legions of the field armies, which numbered approximately 1,000 men each, and they served under the *magistri militum*, or under the *magister officiorum* for the *tribuni* of the *scholae*, a position higher than other *tribuni*.⁵⁷⁶ They could also be given special assignments, such as intelligence gathering and reconnaissance.⁵⁷⁷ *Duces* also likely served under the *magistri militum*, but commanded units of *limitanei* soldiers.⁵⁷⁸ It is more difficult to determine the roles of the other offices with certainty, but they all appear to have been positions of importance in the middle levels of the army.

However, these positions were not typically a direct path to the *magisterium*.⁵⁷⁹ Of thirteen officers in this group, only one *dux* and three *tribuni* were elevated directly to *magister militum*.

⁵⁷¹ AM 16.6.1.

⁵⁷² Jones 1964, 641-42; Matthews 1989, 77-80, 270, 519 n. 33; Trombley 1999, 18.

⁵⁷³ Williams and Friell 1994, 98-99.

⁵⁷⁴ Jones 1964, 372-73, 625, 640-41.

⁵⁷⁵ Valentinian: AM 25.10.9, 26.1.5; Oros. 7.32.2. Valens: AM 26.4.2.

⁵⁷⁶ Mommsen 1889, 195 ff.; Nicasie 1998, 68; Jones 1964, 640-41; *Not. Dig. Occ.* 9, Or. 11.

⁵⁷⁷ AM 19.11.5.

⁵⁷⁸ Nicasie 1998, 77-78.

⁵⁷⁹ Or, for that matter, a common direct path to being emperor. Jovian, as well as the usurpers Magnentius and Procopius, were all higher ranked *comites*.

These promotions all occurred in somewhat exceptional and dire circumstances. Silvanus was promoted for his timely defection to Constantius during the war with Magnentius, and Agilo was promoted at a time when Constantius was both reeling from the loss of Amida and had just been forced to drop his two eastern *magistri*, Ursicinus and Sabinianus.⁵⁸⁰ Similarly, in 363, Jovinus was trying to secure stability for his new reign and hoped to win the loyalty of the former *tribunus* Malarichus by suddenly promoting him to high station, although he declined the offer.⁵⁸¹ Finally, in the wake of the disaster at Adrianople in 378, Gratian seemingly promoted the *dux* Theodosius directly to the *magisterium*.⁵⁸²

Of the remaining ten officers in this first tier, we know that six were promoted once more before becoming *magistri*.⁵⁸³ The other four officers have chronological gaps between their time in this group and when they are first attested as *magistri*, which provides the possibility that they were also promoted further up the military hierarchy, but it has gone unrecorded.⁵⁸⁴ As shown in Table Two, it was the positions of *comes domesticorum* and *comes rei militaris* that comprised the next rung most of these men were promoted to. Like the first rung, one quarter of our *magistri* are attested to have occupied one of these offices (as best as it can be determined, none ever occupied both), although it is not the exact same set of individuals. Seven were *comites domesticorum* and six were *comites rei militaris*.

These positions ranked high in the military hierarchy for different reasons. The *comes domesticorum* was the commander of the *protectores domestici*.⁵⁸⁵ The men in this office received their orders directly from the emperors. For example, Dagalaifus was ordered by Julian to infiltrate Sirmium and captured its commander, *magister equitum* Lucillianus, ahead of the advance of Julian's main army in 361.⁵⁸⁶ Lucillianus himself had been promoted to *comes domesticorum* in 354 and it seems that he remained in this position when he travelled to Persia to undertake diplomatic negotiations with Shapur.⁵⁸⁷ The *comites domesticorum* also occasionally controlled small armies, such as when Severus was sent to Britain to defend against a wave of invasions in 367, or when

⁵⁸⁰ AM 14.10.8, 20.2.5.

⁵⁸¹ See pages 49-50.

⁵⁸² See pages 71-72.

⁵⁸³ Aequitius, Saturninus, Sebastianus, Stilicho, and Traianus.

⁵⁸⁴ Arinthaëus, Gomoarius, Nevitta, and Silvanus.

⁵⁸⁵ Williams 1985, 25; Alfoldi 1967, 412-13; Lenski 2000, 502.

⁵⁸⁶ AM 21.9.6.

⁵⁸⁷ AM 17.14.3, 18.6.17.

Richomeres commanded the Gallic reinforcements sent to the Danube during the Gothic crisis.⁵⁸⁸ Being in such close proximity to the emperors and completing these important missions placed the *comites domesticorum* in a highly favoured position.

The *comites rei militaris* were not as close to the emperors, but their duties closely mirrored those of the *magisterium*, a factor which assisted in distinguishing them for promotion. The office first appears under Constans, so it may have been created by him in the 330s or 340s, or perhaps it was part of the sleuth of reforms undertaken by Constantine I, or even Diocletian. The *comes rei militaris* commanded the smaller regional field armies that were not under the direct oversight of a *magister militum*.⁵⁸⁹ For example, Julius and Aequitius were *comites rei militaris* in command of the eastern and western armies along the Danube in 365, and Nannienus commanded the armies in northern Gaul during the Saxon invasion of 370.⁵⁹⁰ Similarly, Sebastianus commanded the Italian garrison under Valentinian. He played a key role as a secondary commander to the *magistri militum* during these campaigns, cutting the Alemanni off from a potential avenue of escape during the main battle of 368, and in 375 he assisted in burning and pillaging the villages of the Quadi.⁵⁹¹ These duties would have demonstrated that Sebastianus was a capable commander, well-suited to the position of *magister militum*, and this increased his reputation sufficiently for Valens to specifically request that he come to his aid during the Gothic crisis.⁵⁹²

With only two exceptions, the men in this category were promoted directly into the *magisterium*. The anomalies, Barbatio and Julius, both have gaps in their career where it is unclear what position they held. Barbatio was replaced as *comes domesticorum* in 354 but continued to serve Constantius in an unknown role for at least one year.⁵⁹³ Perhaps he held no official position, or he was promoted to the *magisterium* earlier than we are aware of. As for Julius, he was captured and imprisoned by the usurper Procopius in 365, and it is not known what became of him until he reappears six years later as a *magister* in Arabia. Thus we can confidently conclude that these positions were directly below the *magisterium* in rank.

⁵⁸⁸ Severus in Britain: AM 27.8.2. Richomeres on the Danube: AM 31.7.3-5, .6-16, 12.4.

⁵⁸⁹ Jones 1964, 105, 124-5.

⁵⁹⁰ Julius: AM 26.7.5 *comes per Thracias*. Aequitius: AM 26.5.3. Nannienus: AM 28.5.1-7.

⁵⁹¹ In 368: AM 27.10.6. In 375: AM 30.5.13.

⁵⁹² AM 31.11.1.

⁵⁹³ AM 14.11.19-25.

The next rung was the *magisterium* itself. Chapters One and Two have already provided an extensive description of the role and duties of a *magister militum* in the fourth century, so it is not necessary to discuss it further here. There remains one more special position that did not strictly exist as a military office, but still represents the peak of a magisterial career: the consulship. During the Roman Republic, two consuls were elected annually and were the highest ordinary magistracies with broad governing powers. These duties were absorbed by the Roman emperors, but the consulship persisted as an extremely high honour. It was often reserved for the emperors themselves, especially during significant events such as their first year as ruler, or they often gave it to imperial family members. It was also awarded by the emperors to their elite officials, initially mostly to civilian officials, but from the fourth century it was increasingly often given to military commanders.⁵⁹⁴

The changing frequency with which the *magistri* held the consulship helps to highlight the varying degrees of favour they received from different emperors. In some cases, such as Arbitio or Nevitta, the awardee commanded the main field army alongside the emperor and they were probably the most favoured general for this reason, and this helps explain why they were chosen for consulships over other contemporaneous *magistri*.⁵⁹⁵ This could indicate that Gaiso, consul under the usurper Magnentius, was his most favoured general, especially after he successfully executed Constans.⁵⁹⁶ Others were clearly given the consulship as reward for good service, such as Saturninus in 383.⁵⁹⁷ Yet, others were given after a failure, for example Dagalaifus in 366.⁵⁹⁸ Instead, this consulship might have been granted out of respect for a long and valued career, and to usher him into retirement.⁵⁹⁹ Others, like Richomeres in 384, were awarded after a period without any known significance for the awardee.⁶⁰⁰ Thus, it seems that the inclinations of the emperors, rather than the actions of the recipients, more often determined the consulship.

As can be seen in Figure Three, before 366 the consulships awarded to *magistri* were sparse.⁶⁰¹ Constantius awarded at least two consulships to *magistri* within the first decade of his

⁵⁹⁴ Waas 1971, 20.

⁵⁹⁵ See pages 36-37, 42-43, 47-48.

⁵⁹⁶ *Epit.* 41.22-23; *Zos.* 2.42.5; *Chron. Min.* 1.69.

⁵⁹⁷ See note 393.

⁵⁹⁸ AM 26.5.9.

⁵⁹⁹ AM 26.5.9, 27.2.1.

⁶⁰⁰ See page 81.

⁶⁰¹ As discussed on page 22, Ursus and Polemius may have been the first *magistri* to hold the consulship, but we cannot be certain.

tenure as emperor of the east, but in the following fourteen, only awarded a single one to Arbitio.⁶⁰² Constans, Magnentius, and Julian also only awarded one consulship each to their *magistri* during their shorter reigns.⁶⁰³ In the same period, twelve civil officials, mostly Praetorian Prefects, were awarded consulships.⁶⁰⁴ Ammianus, who wrote at a later time when the *magistri* were more powerful, nostalgically recalled how they had been kept in their place under Constantius, and everyone looked up to the Praetorian Prefects as the highest officials, as he thought it should be.⁶⁰⁵

This was not to be the case under the brothers Valentinian and Valens, whose favouritism of the generals was the high-water mark for magisterial consular awards. Because he was both the elder brother and the first proclaimed emperor, Valentinian had the privilege of deciding who was to be awarded the consulships each year, although when choosing an appointee from the east he seems to have valued Valens' recommendations.⁶⁰⁶ Out of the twenty-two total consulships Valentinian was able to distribute with his brother, six were granted to the *magistri*, only two to civilian officials, and the rest were taken by members of the imperial family.⁶⁰⁷ Furthermore, Valentinian officially raised the *magistri militum* to the same standing as the Praetorian and Urban Prefects.⁶⁰⁸ This favour may be attributable to Valentinian's own military career before he was elevated to the purple: it seems that this gave him a great appreciation and fondness for the military men around him.⁶⁰⁹

⁶⁰² The 'at least' comes from the fact that there is the possibility that some earlier consuls were *magistri*, but as discussed in the opening section of Chapter One, accurately identifying these men is impossible. See: Chastagnol 1992, 248; Barnes 1981, 398 n.17. As per the same section of Chapter One, these numbers are reached by discounting the consulship of Bonosus.

⁶⁰³ Constans: Salia in 348. Magnentius: Gaiso in 351. Julian: Nevitta in 362.

⁶⁰⁴ Bagnall, et al. 1987, 222-65. There are quite a few consuls in the early years of this span that nothing is known about; some could have been *magistri* and some could have been civil officials.

⁶⁰⁵ AM 21.16.1-2.

⁶⁰⁶ Lenski 2002, 34; *contra* Bagnall, et al. 1987, 14-15.

⁶⁰⁷ Jones 1964, 142-43; Bagnall, et al. 1987, 264-91. No new consuls were appointed in 375, so Aequitius was consul two years in a row, however this is not equivalent to being awarded two consulships.

⁶⁰⁸ *CTH* 6.7.1, 6.9.1, 6.14.1, 6.22.4. Also see: Jones 1964, 142-43; Näf 1995, 20; Heather 1998, 188-91.

⁶⁰⁹ AM 16.11.6-7, 25.10.8-9, 26.1.5; *Soz.* 6.6.3-4; *Philost. HE* 7.7; *Oros.* 7.32.2. He also seemed to have a dislike for aristocratic senators, a great number of trials occurring during his reign, e.g. the trials conducted by Maximinus.

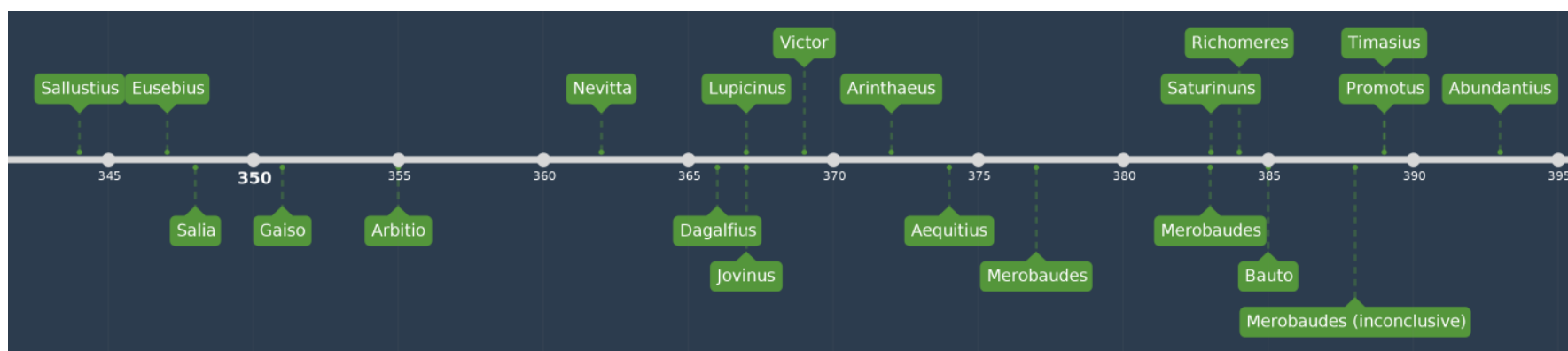


Figure Three. The Consulships of the *Magisterium*. Above the line are the names of *magistri* who received their consulship in the east, and below the line in the west.

Gratian had not been raised by soldiers as his father had been, but by aristocrats and civilians, and thus after he came into power as the western Empire's senior ruler, consular favour began to swing back to the civil officials. He initially gave the 377 consulship to Merobaudes and the Urban Prefect Lucius Aurelius Avianus Symmachus, but after Symmachus died Gratian took the position for himself.⁶¹⁰ Valens' death made Gratian the entire Empire's senior Augustus, and he took the opportunity to award the consulship to his boyhood tutor, the poet Ausonius, and the Praetorian Prefect Olybrius.⁶¹¹

From 380 the consulship becomes more complicated. As the most recently raised member of the imperial college, Theodosius was technically the junior Augustus to Gratian and Valentinian II; however, he was their senior in both age and experience, and this allowed him to wield significant influence over the designation of consuls. From 381-83 Gratian and Theodosius granted two consulships each to civil officials, and one each to *magistri*: Saturninus' first and Merobaudes' second, both in 383.⁶¹² This was especially symbolic for Saturninus, because Theodosius' *quinquennalia*, the celebration of his fifth year as emperor, also took place that year and it was expected he would reserve the consulship for himself.⁶¹³ Additionally, the hierarchical importance of the consulship was also further increased at this point, indicating that even though the *magistri* were receiving less consulships, they were still highly valued.⁶¹⁴

After Gratian's death in 383, Theodosius was able to monopolize power even more firmly over Valentinian II, and this allowed him to control almost all the consular awards. Valentinian was allowed to choose one of the consuls for 385, but this was his only opportunity. He initially chose Praetextatus, the Praetorian Prefect, but he died before the consular year began and was replaced by Bauto.⁶¹⁵ Theodosius nominated six civil officials and four *magistri* over this period.⁶¹⁶ The usurpers Magnus Maximus and Eugenius also appointed their own consuls which went mostly unrecognised by Theodosius, but they also favoured their Prefects over their generals.⁶¹⁷ As we saw

⁶¹⁰ Bagnall, et al. 1987, 19, 288-9.

⁶¹¹ Bagnall, et al. 1987, 292-3.

⁶¹² Bagnall, et al. 1987, 15, 296-301.

⁶¹³ Them. Or. 16.203a.

⁶¹⁴ See pages 76-77.

⁶¹⁵ See page 79.

⁶¹⁶ Bagnall, et al. 1987, 302-25.

⁶¹⁷ Even if we include Merobaudes' potential third consulship in 388, Magnus Maximus nominated his Praetorian Prefect Flavius Euodius in 386, who was recognised by Theodosius, and Eugenius also promoted his Praetorian Prefect Virius Nicomachus Flavianus, who was not recognised by Theodosius in 394. See: Bagnall, et al. 1987, 16.

in Chapter Two, the Praetorian Prefect eclipsed the power of the *magistri* in the eastern Empire, and this can be deduced from the consular awards. Interestingly, Arbogast, perhaps the most powerful *magister* of this period, never received a consulship. Western officials were not afforded any nominations during the years he supervised Valentinian, but even under Eugenius the nomination went to a Praetorian Prefect. So while the consular awards are a useful guide to understanding the changes felt by the *magistri* over the fourth century it is not an exact representation of their power and influence, and by no means was it necessary for a *magister* to gain a consulship to become powerful. In the end, twenty consulships were awarded to the *magistri*, with only Merobaudes receiving two. Thus, almost forty percent of the *magistri* received this honour.⁶¹⁸

3.2.3 Discussion

A consideration to make is the extent to which merit or other factors, such as personal relationships and family, dictated the promotion of men along this career path. Ammianus writes that Julian, upon his acclamation as emperor, promised his soldiers that he would end the practice of officers being promoted above their merits through favouritism.⁶¹⁹ This indicates that it was perceived by disgruntled rank-and-file soldiers that at times they were being led by incompetent officers. However, it seems most promotions along the magisterial career path were based on merit. For example, Flavius Theodosius was promoted to the *magisterium* after his successful defence of Britain in 368-69.⁶²⁰ Sebastianus was summoned by Valens and promoted to the *magisterium* because of his renowned reputation.⁶²¹ Other factors may have contributed to these promotions, but the military successes of these and other *magistri* were the primary causes for their endorsements.

Other promotions did not directly follow military successes, but still demonstrate a consideration of various merits. Sabinianus was probably promoted as *magister* in the east in order to continue Constantius' diplomatic approach to managing relations with the Persian Empire.⁶²²

⁶¹⁸ This is not including the inconclusive third consulship for Merobaudes, or for Stilicho's two and Rumoridus' one, which fall outside the time period under examination in this thesis.

⁶¹⁹ AM 20.5.7.

⁶²⁰ AM 28.3.9; *Pan. Lat.* 12.5.2.

⁶²¹ See pages 69.

⁶²² See pages 34-35.

While not based on his military merit, Sabinianus' promotion thus still contained a consideration of other types of merit. Furthermore, Aequitius was elevated to the *magisterium* so he could better defend Illyricum from Procopius in 364, but his promotion was probably also due to the support he showed Valentinian during the imperial election process because of their shared Pannonian heritage.⁶²³ These personal relationships were probably fairly important in many promotions, and we can see it clearly in the career of the younger Theodosius and Arbogast. There seems to have been a clique of powerful officials in Valentinian I's court who supported Flavius Theodosius, and during Gratian's reign they probably offered their support to the younger Theodosius.⁶²⁴ This assistance helps to explain Theodosius' rapid promotion from relative obscurity to *magister militum* and then emperor. Additionally, Eunapius records that Arbogast was Bauto's son, and upon the death of his father, Arbogast inherited Bauto's position.⁶²⁵ As discussed above, this was reportedly done without the permission of emperor Valentinian II, but was instead because Arbogast had the support of the soldiers.⁶²⁶ Arbogast was probably also supported by the many other Franks in the Roman military administration during the late fourth century.⁶²⁷ However, the support that Aequitius, Theodosius, and Arbogast received from these different groups rested on their competency. Thus, even when nepotism or favouritism contributed to a *magister's* rise, it did not necessarily preclude them from needing to be militarily experienced.

However, merit does not explain all promotions to the *magisterium*. For example, Traianus was promoted in 378 after the battle of Ad Salices, which was not a failure, but was far from a success, and even led emperor Valens to berate him for not defeating the Goths.⁶²⁸ His eventual promotion to the *magisterium* was probably a result of Valens' desperation to defeat the marauding barbarians. Furthermore, although Malarichus was clearly capable enough to become the commander of the *gentiles*, Jovian tried to promote him to the *magisterium* because he did not have the renown to achieve the position under normal circumstances.⁶²⁹ Thus, while most magisterial

⁶²³ See page 53.

⁶²⁴ See page 72.

⁶²⁵ Eun. fr. 58; cf. Joh. Ant. fr. 187. *PLRE*, 97, doubts that Arbogast was actually Bauto's son. Although Eunapius is generally a reliable contemporary source, it does seem doubtful that Arcadius would marry Arbogast's sister, Aelia Eudoxia, in early 395, because at that time Arbogast was suspected of murdering Valentinian II, Arcadius' cousin-in-law and the senior emperor.

⁶²⁶ See page 80.

⁶²⁷ Drinkwater 2007, 158-59.

⁶²⁸ See page 68-69.

⁶²⁹ AM 25.5.6.

promotions in the fourth century were based on military merit, some were based on other merits or were supported by other groups, and some were not based on merit at all.

The fourth century military career path is quite different to that of the Roman Republic and early Empire. The career paths of senators and *equites* incorporated both military and civil postings. The fourth century career path was remunerated, unlike the senatorial *cursus honorum* but similar to that of the *tres militiae*, although the *magistri militum* occupied much higher positions than the *equites* did during the early Empire. Thus, the late third and early fourth century reforms made radical changes in the military administration. After this period of reform, however, the Roman military stayed relatively unchanged into the sixth century, indicating this period of reform was a single, intense burst of changes that eventually stabilised.

3.3 The Identity of the *Magistri Militum*: Barbarian, Roman, or Something in Between?

3.3.1 Introduction

The manner in which the Roman army employed foreign troops alongside native citizen soldiers has a complex and dynamic history, and it played an important part in Rome's military successes. In the early fifth century BCE the *Foedus Cassianum*, named after its negotiator, the first Republican *magister equitum*, Spurius Cassius, codified the use of soldiers from Rome's Italian allies, and the register known as the *formula togatorum* maintained an annual catalogue of the troops that Rome could mobilise from its allies.⁶³⁰ While there are some recorded instances of betrayal by these allies, the fact that they funded their own contingents of soldiers, and that they generally fought just as viciously as the Romans themselves, greatly eased the burden of warfare of the city-state of Rome and helped its early expansion.⁶³¹ The allies eventually sought greater rights and an equal standing with Rome, and the Latin War (340-338 BCE) concluded by incorporating most of the allies, as well as the Campanian and Volsci former-enemies of Rome, as Roman citizens.⁶³² Consequently, those who were once foreigners became natives of the Roman Republic.

Rome continued to extend its control and diplomatic relationships further afield in the Mediterranean, and two and a half centuries later the Social War (91-88 BCE) resulted in Roman citizenship being extended to the Republic's Italian allies, as well as the slightly lesser Latin Rights to the Cisalpine Gaul communities north of the Po River.⁶³³ Thus, while unplanned, Rome repeated the same system of initial military alliance, followed by territorial expansion, and eventual enfranchisement of non-Roman groups. Before the Social War even began, Rome's armies had been utilising other forms of non-Italian allied troops, such as Numidian cavalry or Cretan archers, and this increased into the first century BCE after the Marian reforms.⁶³⁴ These troops became crucial

⁶³⁰ Hoyos 2007, 70; Rich 2007, 11; Dion. Hal. *Rom. Ant.* 6.95.2; Livy 2.18.5, 33.9. The *foedus* did undergo a number of modifications during this time, e.g. Livy 7.12.7, but the intention of the agreement remained the same.

⁶³¹ Rawlings 2007, 52-53; Polyb. 6.21.

⁶³² Rich 2007, 14.

⁶³³ Pallottino 2014, 157; Duncan 2017, 178-79.

⁶³⁴ Hoyos 2007, 68-69; McCall 2002; Southern and Dixon 1992, 20-25; Harmand 1967, 46-51.

elements of Roman armies.⁶³⁵ Estimates indicate that some armies may have been composed of twice as many foreigners as Romans, although it was more often divided into roughly equal portions.⁶³⁶

As Roman sovereignty grew to cover much of the Mediterranean, the territories that had been supplying these mercenaries were also absorbed into the Roman polity. After the Republic transitioned into the Empire, non-citizen residents had the legal status of *peregrini*, and from their numbers emperor Augustus (27 BCE-14 CE) formed the *auxilia*, which amounted to approximately half the strength of the Roman army and served as a compliment to the citizen-legions.⁶³⁷ In time, however, Roman citizens would even serve in the *auxilia* alongside non-citizens.⁶³⁸ During the early Empire, the army also employed irregular units known as *numeri*, which fought in their native styles and were composed of probably entirely non-citizens.⁶³⁹ Furthermore, Marcus Aurelius is known to have settled 3,000 Nartisti inside the Empire who later provided a unit of cavalry to the army.⁶⁴⁰ Thus, the Roman Empire continued to use foreign troops in a myriad of different ways, and these groups were often eventually incorporated into the state.

The third century CE was a major turning point in the way foreign soldiers were employed. A key motivation for *peregrini* to join the *auxilia* was a grant of citizenship after completion of their service. However, in 212, the emperor Caracalla granted citizenship en masse to nearly all Roman subjects, ending this important distinction between legion and *auxilia*, as well as between citizen and non-citizen in regards to Roman identity.⁶⁴¹ The Roman population had also become increasingly antipathetic towards military service, and this loss of upwards social mobility through the *auxilia* compounded the problem.⁶⁴² This meant that the army would find it difficult to secure Roman recruits at the same time it became necessary to significantly expand the size of the army to aid the recovery from the Third Century Crisis.⁶⁴³ Furthermore, the Roman emperors increasingly

⁶³⁵ Caes. *B. Gal.* 7.65.4; Waas 1971, 1.

⁶³⁶ Toynbee 1965, 2.128-35; Brunt 1971, 677-86.

⁶³⁷ Goldsworthy 2003, 80, 208; Heather 2005, 119; Gilliver 2007, 185-86. For some primary examples of their role in Roman warfare, see: *CIL* VII 218; Cichorius 1896, pl. XIX, L.

⁶³⁸ Gilliver 2007, 193.

⁶³⁹ Gilliver 2007, 195.

⁶⁴⁰ Cass. Dio 71.21; *AE* 1956, 124; Stickler 2007, 496; Waas 1971, 2.

⁶⁴¹ Mathisen 2006, 1014-15; Liebeschuetz 1998, 134.

⁶⁴² Patterson 1993, 97-8. See also: Liebeschuetz 1993, 274, and for the later period: Errington 1996b, 7.

⁶⁴³ The manpower shortage theory on the Roman collapse has been put forward most strongly by Boak 1955, which was been negatively received, ie. Finley 1958. Whether it was a decisive factor in the collapse of the

preferred to keep their citizens working the land and paying taxes.⁶⁴⁴ To counteract these developments in the fourth century, the Empire began to rely more heavily on employing men from across the Roman frontiers.⁶⁴⁵ These were the so-called barbarians. They continued to come into Roman service through a variety of ways, and the poor state of the sources do not make it easy to understand all the terms used. The most common were the *dediticii*, war prisoners who were given the chance to join the Roman army, and *laeti*, who were given Roman lands in return for taxes and recruits.⁶⁴⁶ Others still were recruited voluntarily as individuals or small groups from external tribes existing across the Roman frontiers.⁶⁴⁷ A final important change was the previously discussed opening of a new path for any soldier, including the barbarians, to be promoted to the upper ranks.

This so-called barbarisation of the late Roman military has several issues that are still being debated by scholars today. When looking at the army as a whole, historians often consider the ratio of barbarians to Romans in different periods, and whether this had a negative impact upon the army's efficacy. This discussion reaches as far back as Gibbon, and even has a precedent in the ancient world.⁶⁴⁸ Some, such as Wolf Liebeschuetz and Arther Ferrill, argue that barbarisation deeply weakened the army and it was one of the primary causes of the collapse of the western Empire in the fifth century.⁶⁴⁹ Most historians, however, have moved away from this theory in recent years, and it is more often believed that the regular Roman army remained an effective fighting force well into the mid-fifth century. It has been argued that the rank-and-file soldiery of the Roman army was much too large and homogenous to become barbarised through the slow recruitment of foreigners, especially seeing as they were recruited from Germanic, Gothic, and Eastern tribal groups, which each had their own different subdivisions, further lowering the likelihood that any individual barbarian practices would be adopted.⁶⁵⁰ In his recent monograph *How Rome Fell*, Goldsworthy does not once mention barbarisation as a cause, and Ralph Mathisen posits that barbarian integration, including in the army, was one of the reasons the end of the

western Roman Empire or not, there is a large amount of contemporary evidence which indicates the Roman army had difficulty in obtaining domestic soldiers: *CTh* 7.13.4, .5, .10, 7.22.1. For the expanded size of the army, see: Coello 1996.

⁶⁴⁴ Waas 1971, 4.

⁶⁴⁵ Strobel 2007, 278-279; Fanning 2011; Mathisen 2019, 143.

⁶⁴⁶ Jones 1964, 614, 620, 665. Silvanus was the descendent of Bonitus, a *laetus*. For a list of all the major settlements of foreigners up to Constantine I, see: MacMullen 1963, 553.

⁶⁴⁷ Elton 1996, 134-5. Gildo was one who voluntarily joined the Romans (*AM* 15.5.16, 5.33; cf. *Aur. Vict. Caes.* 42.15; *Epit.* 42.11).

⁶⁴⁸ Gibbon 1781, 130-33; Veg. 2.2-3.

⁶⁴⁹ Liebeschuetz 1993; Ferrill 1986.

⁶⁵⁰ Bleckmann 2009, 206.

western Roman Empire occurred as a transformation into the new successor states rather than a violent overthrow.⁶⁵¹

A separate but related debate in this area is the employment of standalone units of barbarian soldiers in the fifth century that were not intermixed with the regular Roman army and instead fought under their own barbarian leaders. It is much more commonly accepted that, because these groups of *foederati* were loyal to their own interests rather than Rome's, they were a deeply destabilising force and they played a key role in the collapse of the western Empire. Some of the leaders of these groups, including Alaric and Gainas, became *magistri militum*, and at times directly competed with other *magistri*, such as Stilicho and Aetius, who held powerful positions controlling the child-emperors. Although much has already been published on these topics, there is more to analyse and understand, and hopefully the present study of the fourth century barbarian *magistri* will contribute further to our knowledge and comprehension of barbarians in the upper Roman army command.

To effectively discuss this topic, we must first decide on the appropriate terminology, and explain what it means for a *magister militum* to be a barbarian. Various terms are employed by scholars investigating this area, which has grown significantly since its inception in the 1960s by Reinhard Wenskus. 'Ethnicity', and the related word ethnogenesis, are by far the most popular terms used by scholars in the field. These terms frequently denote situations where a group, for various reasons (socio-economic, political, perceived kinship ties, etc.) professes belief in or claim a shared common descent and at the same time purport to share a common historical memory. This belief in a common past and descent was in turn often used to create 'in' and 'out' groups.⁶⁵² Unfortunately, these words separate people too divisively for our purposes; as will be discussed below, 'barbarian' *magistri* could be both 'in' and 'out' of elite Roman circles, and while they reached significant social heights, they also faced some discrimination and bias. Furthermore, we have no insight into whether individual the *magistri* personally believed in a shared descent, but only how Roman authors portrayed them. 'Roman' ethnicity was also a flexible and unsettled concept that changed over time and varied according to an individual's perspective.⁶⁵³ This

⁶⁵¹ Goldsworthy 2009; Mathisen 2019, a view also shared by Geary 1988. For a fuller discussion of the two sides to this debate, see: Stickler 2007, 497-98.

⁶⁵² Wenskus 1961; Amory 1997, 14; Eriksen 1993, 18.

⁶⁵³ Amory 1997, 14; Pohl 2014, 256-57.

complexity means that it will be difficult to separate the *magistri* with the term ‘ethnicity’.⁶⁵⁴ These difficulties have been acknowledged recently, with Walter Pohl acknowledging that ‘ethnicity’ should only be used in a way that is neither overly restricted nor too “all-encompassing”.⁶⁵⁵

‘Culture’ as it refers to the shared customs, ideas, and institutions of a society, exists on a larger level than ethnicity, and is too broad for the present discussion. We could say some *magistri* were Germanic and some were perhaps Persian, but all were also part of Roman culture, and many cultural groups incorporated elements of other groups, so much so that there is a high degree of overlap. There have been attempts to identify different cultural groups through archaeological remains; however, recently it has been shown that individuals were sometimes buried with artefacts from more than one cultural group, which has hindered this method.⁶⁵⁶ Furthermore, it was entirely possible for barbarians to become Roman through a process of acculturation, especially if one served in the military, which continued to be an important path to Romanisation.⁶⁵⁷ However, although a rapid path to acculturation, the Roman military’s culture was decidedly different to the rest of the Roman population, as it had incorporated traditionally barbarian elements of ferocity and animalism into something of a unique subculture.⁶⁵⁸ ‘Nationality’ is another popular term in the field which describes belonging to a group of people “defined by laws, institutions, religion, language, and customs”.⁶⁵⁹ Pohl writes that direct participation in a nation’s affairs defines one as belonging to that nation; on this basis none of our *magistri* would be considered Goths or Franks as they did not engage in the internal affairs of those groups during their time in the Roman military.⁶⁶⁰

All these terms are elastic, and any definition of them will ultimately be arbitrary.⁶⁶¹ Guy Halsall has recently argued for solving the Roman-barbarian aporia by seeing ethnicity as multi-layered, and ethnic change as a process of acquiring new layers and reshuffling the importance of old ones.⁶⁶² Although this might be the most accurate way to conceptualise identity, and could reconcile the differences between Roman, Roman military, and barbarian identities, this results in

⁶⁵⁴ Noble 2006, 16; Halsall 2018, 44.

⁶⁵⁵ Pohl 2018, 33.

⁶⁵⁶ Stickler 2007, 500-1.

⁶⁵⁷ Mitchell and Greatrex 2000, xi; Bjornlie 2018.

⁶⁵⁸ Halsall 2007, 101-110; 2018, 50.

⁶⁵⁹ Kaldellis 2007, 43.

⁶⁶⁰ Pohl 1998, 4.

⁶⁶¹ Mitchell and Greatrex 2000, xi.

⁶⁶² Halsall 2018, 41-42.

individuals having an incredibly complex, unique, ever-changing and essentially incomparable monolith of identity. Such an approach would render any attempt at prosopographical analysis futile. Despite all these difficulties, the Roman authors of our sources regularly labelled individual *magistri* as Goths, or Franks, or other groups, and interpersonal interactions were modified by these identifications. Thus, modern terms and frameworks fail to accurately fit the *magistri*, who probably existed somewhere between barbarian and Roman classifications.

Because ancient works do not represent a dialogue between Romans and non-Romans, but only the voices of the elite Romans who used their writing to distinguish themselves from the barbarian ‘Other’, they are neither impartial nor unbiased.⁶⁶³ However, because they are our only sources of information, we must seek to understand their perspective and give individuals the labels that the Romans gave them. To do this, we must understand the nuances of how the Romans applied the idea of ‘barbarian’ to the *magistri militum*, and how they might have identified them as such.

As we have seen already, Rome had a long history with foreign soldiers, but they also had a long social history with non-Romans. The city’s etiological myths included Aeneas coming to Latium from Troy, and that the city itself had been populated by foreign criminals and wanderers in its earliest days.⁶⁶⁴ Even in the fourth century, authors acknowledged the importance that foreigners played in the strength of the state.⁶⁶⁵ Despite this favourable mythos, the Roman emperors had long portrayed one of their primary duties to be defending the Empire and its people from these barbarians; at the same time, it was their duty to extend Roman civilisation to the barbarians.⁶⁶⁶ This complex duality can be seen in multiple other ways. For example, the *magistri* were some of the most powerful individuals in Roman society, and their correspondence was eagerly sought out by prominent aristocrats. Symmachus and Libanius fostered friendships with barbarian *magistri* as with Roman *magistri*, but Symmachus also thought the barbarians were a “savage people”.⁶⁶⁷ This mirrors other references to the perceived savage, deceitful, and violent nature of barbarians that riddle Roman literature: Prudentius, a poet of the fourth and fifth centuries, wrote, “what is Roman

⁶⁶³ Halsall 2007 56; Heather 1999, 235-36.

⁶⁶⁴ Livy 1.8.5-6. Virgil’s *Aeneid* deals with the life of Aeneas.

⁶⁶⁵ Demandt 1989, 75-6. Although Demandt cites AM 27.4.32, the quote is located at 28.4.32.

⁶⁶⁶ Bleckmann 2009, 200; Ladner 1976, 12-16, and also *Symm. Or.* 16.30.

⁶⁶⁷ *Symm. Or.* 1.19. For their correspondence with barbarian *magistri*, see: *Lib. Ep.* 866, 898, 972, 1007, 1024, 1525; *Symm. Ep.* 3.54-69, 4.1-14, 4.15-16. For their correspondence with Roman *magistri*, see: *Lib. Ep.* 318, 350, 520, 596; *Symm. Ep.* 3.70-3, 74-80.

and what is barbarian are as different from each other as the four-footed creature is distinct from the two-footed or the dumb from the speaking.”⁶⁶⁸

The relationships Roman aristocrats developed with the *magistri* probably also played an important role in identifying them. Simple social conversations would probably lead to a discussion of birth places, parentage, and upbringing; all things that would contribute to establishing someone as a barbarian or Roman. It would of course be possible for barbarians to lie or cover up their past if they chose, however, it seems that such things as an inability to navigate Roman social norms would have betrayed them as barbarians. It was identified by Michele Salzman that Symmachus used the Roman custom of *amicitia* to reinforce his relationship with the generals Bauto and Richomeres, but at the same time reveal their failures and ignorance of its practices, which subtly alienated them by emphasising their sub-par understanding of Roman culture.⁶⁶⁹ This is not to say that Romans could not form friendships and partnerships with barbarians, but the relationships were complex. This aversion for barbarians would not begin to disappear until the mid-fifth century when foreign peoples had begun to settle large swathes of imperial territory.⁶⁷⁰

In one study, Pohl identifies language and method of warfare as some of the traits often used by the sources to distinguish barbarian from Roman.⁶⁷¹ There is no indication that any of our *magistri* could not communicate effectively in Latin or Greek, as it was for the Byzantine general Gilacius in 547, who knew neither language.⁶⁷² As for following the traditional Roman method of warfare, they generally did, although Modares is recorded to have ordered his men to shed their armour and ambush their enemy, a decidedly un-Roman tactic.⁶⁷³ Other indications of barbarism identified by Pohl included clothes and hairstyles.⁶⁷⁴ It was perhaps the red or blonde hair common to Germans that would identify them as barbarian, even if they cut it in a more Roman-style. Thus, simple physical appearance may have helped Romans identify people as barbarians, and these things rarely survive in the sources.

⁶⁶⁸ Prud. *C. Symm.* 2.816-7, trans. Thomson 1995. There are truly too many references to list, but for some other fourth and fifth century examples, see: *Pan. Lat.* 2.32.4; *Sid. Ap. Ep.* 1.7.6, 2.1.2, 5.5.3. Also see: Woolf 2012.

⁶⁶⁹ Salzman 2006. Also see: Mathisen 1997, 148.

⁶⁷⁰ Ladner 1976, 23-4.

⁶⁷¹ Pohl 1998.

⁶⁷² Procop. *BP* 7.26.24; Parnell 2017, 44.

⁶⁷³ Zos. 4.25.2-3; Eun. fr. 45.1.

⁶⁷⁴ Pohl 1998, 52.

The term ‘barbarian’ could also be applied to individuals who had very different degrees of connection to foreign peoples. For example, both Modares and Gildo were members of foreign royal houses.⁶⁷⁵ Gildo’s father may have even been a Roman officer before becoming king of the Moors, and some of Gildo’s brothers also fought alongside the Romans.⁶⁷⁶ Thus, the Moorish royal house was closely tied to the Empire. Conversely, the Frank Silvanus was so hated by his people that they would have killed him if they received the chance.⁶⁷⁷ Some barbarian *magistri* therefore had close ties to their people, and some had minimal ties.⁶⁷⁸

Silvanus was also a *semibarbarus*, a man with one foreign and one native Roman parent.⁶⁷⁹ One of the most aristocratic and best documented *magistri militum* in our time period, Stilicho, also fell into the *semibarbarus* group.⁶⁸⁰ Stilicho was an extremely important fixture in both the eastern and western courts at different times of his career. He was a member of the imperial family through his marriage to Serena, emperor Theodosius’ niece, and his two daughters consecutively married emperor Honorius.⁶⁸¹ Additionally, although outside our time period, Stilicho would be made consul twice.⁶⁸² These social heights were not just held by Stilicho, but by many barbarian *magistri*. Others were consul once or multiple times, Eusebius was related by marriage to the Neo-Flavian dynasty, and Ellebichus was noted as a wealthy land-owner.⁶⁸³ The high status of these barbarian individuals makes classification, both ancient and modern, more difficult. As the fifth and sixth century king of the Italian Ostrogoths, Theodoric, remarked: “the poor Roman imitates the Goth, and the rich Goth imitates the Roman.”⁶⁸⁴

⁶⁷⁵ Zos. 4.25.2 calls Modares a prince of the Gothic royal family, and this is often presumed to mean he was a member of the Balt dynasty (Wolfram 1988, 131; Heather 1991, 189-90). This would make him a relative of Athanaric, who had remained north of the Danube with a small retinue of Goths until 381 (Them. *Or.* 15 190d ff.; Soc. 5.10; Jord. *Get.* 142 ff.; *Cons. Const.* s.a. 381; Zos. 4.34.4-5; Oros. 7.34.7). Athanaric was an enemy of Fritigern, the leader of the Goths marauding Thrace and Illyricum, and it may have been this rivalry that gave Modares cause to join the Roman side. For Gildo, see: AM 29.5.6; Claud. *de bello Gild.* 335-36, 347, 390-1. His magisterial command is first attested in 393 by *CTh* 9.7.9, but Claud. *de bello Gild.* 153-55 indicates he was promoted in 386. Also see: Demandt 1970, 719; Matthews 1975, 245.

⁶⁷⁶ AM 29.5.2; Camps 1984, 185-86.

⁶⁷⁷ See page 30.

⁶⁷⁸ Silvanus still had relations with a number of other Franks in Roman service, such as Malarichus (AM 15.5.6-11).

⁶⁷⁹ AM 15.5.16, 5.33; cf. Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 42.15; *Epit.* 42.11.

⁶⁸⁰ Jer. *Ep.* 123.16. See also: Oros. 7.38.1; Joh. Ant. fr. 187.

⁶⁸¹ Stilicho’s first daughter, Maria, married Honorius in 398 (Zos. 5.4.1, 12.1) but she died in 408 and Honorius married Stilicho’s other daughter, Thermantia (Zos. 5.28.1; Olymp. fr. 3; Philost. *HE* 12.2; Jord. *Rom.* 332, *Get.* 154; Zon. 13.21).

⁶⁸² Bagnall, et al. 1987, 334-35, 344-45.

⁶⁸³ Eusebius: *PLRE*, 308. Ellebichus: Lib. *Ep.* 898.

⁶⁸⁴ *Excerpt. Val.* 61; Amory 1997, 27; Demandt 1989.

One factor that seems to be often underemphasised by modern scholars is parentage. Stilicho and Silvanus were *semibarbari* because of their barbarian fathers; Gildo and Modares both belonged to barbarian families.⁶⁸⁵ The same could very likely be true for more. It did not matter how ethnically or culturally adapted these *magistri* became or how high they rose in society; they were born barbarians and, to aristocratic Roman eyes, they remained barbarians. Thus, whereas it is difficult for academics to pin down in our modern terminology what separated the two groups, the division existed strongly in the minds of the Romans.

While it seems there were generally no significant hurdles to a barbarian's career, there may have been a prohibition on them obtaining the imperial office. Many historians have written about this prohibition, often expressing certainty that there can be "no doubt" about its existence.⁶⁸⁶ However, the evidence for this ban is sparse and contradictory, so it must be carefully weighed. There are no references in the law-codices to such a ban, and only two pieces of literary evidence that illuminate the matter. Philostorgius, who lived in the eastern Empire and therefore it is unclear to what extent he would be familiar with political customs in the west, writes that after the death of Valentinian II, Arbogast realized that he would not be able to make himself emperor because of his barbarian ancestry – a statement which helps us to conclude that parentage remained an important consideration to the Romans.⁶⁸⁷ This statement is rather clear, and Haeling's argument that Philostorgius fabricated this as an explanation for events in the west does not seem convincing; even if he had, the fact that he could present this description to his audience as a real occurrence supports the fact that Romans believed this ban existed.

Other literary evidence comes from an account of a Catholic synod at Rome in 501, which records that king Theodoric quoted the eastern Alanic *magister militum* Aspar as having refused an offer to take the eastern imperial throne because he feared that he would "give rise to a tradition in royal power".⁶⁸⁸ This quote is of particular note as it presents evidence both for and against a restriction on the imperial office. On the one hand, the offer indicates that Aspar was considered to be a viable candidate; but his response that he would "give rise" to a new tradition implies that

⁶⁸⁵ AM 31.12.6.

⁶⁸⁶ Gibbon 1781, 63; Jones 1964, 327; Cameron 1969, 274; 1970, 38. With some more reservations: McEvoy 2013, 54, 141; Lee 2015, 108 n.45.

⁶⁸⁷ Philost. *HE* 11.2.

⁶⁸⁸ *Acta synhodorum habitarum Romae* 5. Croke 2005, 150 n.10, guesses that this occurred in 457.

what was being offered had never happened before, and was perhaps even against the prevailing customs of succession. The matter is further complicated by Procopius, who writes that Aspar could have become emperor if he only renounced his Arian Christianity and converted to orthodoxy.⁶⁸⁹ Thus perhaps it was Aspar's religion, rather than his barbarian heritage, which was the subject of the new custom. This excerpt, however, is not reconcilable with it being Aspar's choice to not accept the imperial throne. A further difficulty is that any offer Aspar received is far removed from occurrences in the fourth century western Empire where the *magistri* in the focus of this thesis could have become emperors, and we cannot be certain how opinions on identity and religion had changed over the intervening decades. Furthermore, the identity of Aspar as a barbarian is not clear; his father was a *magister militum* and he was deeply intertwined in the politics of the east his entire life.⁶⁹⁰ Ultimately, the historicity of this episode is unclear and a broader discussion is outside the purview of this thesis, but it at the very least indicates that restrictions on who could hold the imperial office absolutely existed, even if they were not consistently and clearly articulated.

With only this reference, the direct evidence for the ban on barbarians becoming emperors is slim, and there are three cases of barbarian usurpers which might, on first glance, seem to disprove the existence of the ban; however, deeper analysis shows that this is not the case. The first is Magnentius, a usurper in the western Empire from 350-53. Although the sources record that he was a barbarian, Drinkwater argues that this claim was the result of mistakes and propaganda, and Magnentius was probably actually a Roman.⁶⁹¹ Another exception is Silvanus, the Frankish magisterial usurper of Cologne. While his ancestry is beyond doubt, his claim to the purple never extended further than the city and his soldiers, and he never gained wide acceptance from the Roman aristocracy. Furthermore, he was born in Gaul and his father, while a Frank, was a lauded Roman officer.⁶⁹² Thus, perhaps like Aspar, this made his leadership more palatable, although according to Philostorgius, the important factor was the barbarian status of one's father. Furthermore, both Magnentius and Silvanus rose to power within a few years of each other and both in Gaul, and this may indicate they both received important support from the powerful Frankish military clique that existed at that time.⁶⁹³ Another important case is the usurpation of Joannes from 423-25.⁶⁹⁴ Joannes seized power in Rome after the death of Honorius, but was

⁶⁸⁹ Procop. *DV* 1.6.3.

⁶⁹⁰ For Aspar's father, see: *PLRE* II, 137-38. For Aspar, see: *PLRE* II, 164-69.

⁶⁹¹ Drinkwater 2000, 131-45.

⁶⁹² *AM* 15.5.33.

⁶⁹³ Drinkwater 2000, 140.

⁶⁹⁴ *PLRE* II, 594-95.

eventually defeated by an eastern army lead by Aspar. Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos, writing in the fourteenth century, is the only source to record Joannes' ethnicity as a Goth.⁶⁹⁵ A source so far removed from the events it describes must be treated cautiously when we are not aware of the sources employed, so it is difficult to use this example conclusively. Furthermore, all these examples of potential barbarian emperors never achieved a full legitimised status, and therefore cannot conclusively disprove the existence of a prohibition on the imperial office.

The presence of the ban might also be supported by negative evidence. There seem to have been multiple occasions when barbarians could have made themselves emperors, but they declined the opportunity, and maybe this ban is the final part of the explanation of why certain *magistri* forwent the traditional route to power. For example, the path to the throne was open to Merobaudes in 375, or Arbogast in 392. Their decision to raise other candidates was motivated by a plethora of factors, including avoiding civil war for Merobaudes. The failures of Vetranio's and Silvanus' attempts to make themselves emperors may have also been a factor. As Waas has previously argued, it may be that they also decided to remaining in powerful behind-the-scenes positions where they could control the emperors was more desirable.⁶⁹⁶ However, in both Merobaudes' and Arbogast's cases, a final factor that helped them reach their decisions may have been that they would never have been comfortably accepted by the Roman aristocratic population because of a prevailing disdain for barbarian rulers. This explanation can also be used for more cases. In 354 Ursicinus was rumoured to be seeking the throne, not for himself, but for his children. Therefore it seems likely that he was considered a barbarian, but his children were Roman enough to be possible candidates.⁶⁹⁷ Furthermore, in the fifth century, the barbarian generalissimo Ricimer cycled through multiple adult emperors, even leaving the throne empty for months at a time, rather than become emperor himself. Moreover, when Odoacer deposed emperor Romulus 'Augustulus' he chose to rule Italy as a king, rather than emperor.⁶⁹⁸ Finally, perhaps most telling, of all the powerful *magistri* of the fifth century, only the Romans Constantius III and Avitus became emperors themselves.⁶⁹⁹ All this evidence, combined with the statement of Philostorgius, should make us confident that there was a de facto ban on barbarians becoming emperors in the fourth and fifth centuries.

⁶⁹⁵ Nic. Call. *HE* 14.7.

⁶⁹⁶ Waas 1971, 16-19.

⁶⁹⁷ For more discussion on the viability of the children of barbarians, see below.

⁶⁹⁸ *Fast. Vind. Prior.* s.a. 476; *Pasch. Camp.* s.a. 476; *Contin. Havn. ordo prior* s.a. 476, *ordo post* s.a. 476.

⁶⁹⁹ Oros. 7.42.2; Olymp. fr. 37.

This ban will also help us be more certain of which *magistri* were barbarian and Roman. If someone was considered to be a viable emperor, such as Aequitius or Severus, or actually became a recognised and legitimate emperor, like Vetricano or Theodosius, we can be confident they were Romans. We can also be confident that their immediate relatives, such as Flavius Theodosius the Elder, were Romans. Furthermore, there is no evidence that *semibarbari* were any more acceptable as emperors than full barbarians, and so they will be considered in the same category in this study. It is also apparent that the barbarian stigma could disappear from a family line in successive generations. As stated above, Ursicinus was accused of seeking the imperial throne for his children rather than himself, and the same was suspected of Stilicho.⁷⁰⁰ From this, we can tentatively deduce that after enough generations ‘barbarism’ was considered sufficiently diluted, although without more ancestral records it is difficult to ascertain whether this was universal, or whether something like Stilicho’s high degree of Romanisation quickened this process. Thus, exactly who was and who was not a barbarian was complex and might not have even been conceived in a strict way by the Romans themselves. We can only make the best attempt possible attempt at identification, and we must remember that the conclusions drawn here are only for a specific snapshot of people and time, and will not necessarily hold true outside of the fourth century *magistri militum*.

3.3.2 Survey

There have been two previous studies conducted to assess the degree of barbarisation in the fourth century *magisterium*.⁷⁰¹ The first was undertaken by Hans Teitler in 1989, and looked at only the number of German *magistri*. Hugh Elton revisited the topic in 1996 and expanded the view to all magisterial identities. We will now discuss the methodologies of each study to assess the reliability of their results, and where it might be possible to make improvements that render the resulting statistics more accurate. This will lead into the discussion of this project’s different methodological processes and results. Finally, the conclusions will be placed into their fourth century context to illustrate what they mean for the Roman military.

⁷⁰⁰ Zos. 5.32.1-2; Olymp. fr. 5.2; Philost. HE 12.2; Oros. 7.38; Marc. com. s.a. 408; Soz. 9.4.

⁷⁰¹ Nicasic 1998, 102-3 also briefly summarised Teitler’s analysis in 1998 and added to it some of his own calculations, but this was not a significant enough development in the study of barbarian *magistri militum* to warrant a full discussion here.

Teitler's study was conducted as part of an investigation into whether the primary sources over-represent Germans in the Roman world. He states that he used the appendix of the *Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire* to find that there were 60 *magistri* from 342 to 395.⁷⁰² However, the *PLRE* only contains fifty-six *magistri* in its appendix.⁷⁰³ Because of this confusion, we cannot be entirely certain who he included or excluded from his calculations. Fortunately, he does include a list of all those he considers 'Certain Barbarians': Silvanus, Malarichus, Bauto, Arbogast, Richomeres, Agilo, Modares, Stilicho, Nevitta, Merobaudes, Butherichus, Gildo, Victor, and Bacurius.⁷⁰⁴ There are three differences between these and my own results. First, I judged it more likely that Bacurius was not a *magister militum*, but only rose as high as the position of *comes domesticorum*, and therefore should not be counted.⁷⁰⁵ Furthermore, there is no certainty from the primary material on the origins of Merobaudes or Butherichus. Teitler included these two into the 'Certain' category because the authors of the *PLRE* single them out as particularly likely to be Germans based on their names having certain Germanic traits. A full explanation of this method of identification will be explored below in the discussion of this thesis' methodology, but this does not indicate they were certainly barbarians. Therefore, they should instead be placed into the category of 'Probable Barbarians', which Teitler populated with ten other men. He does not provide a list for this group, so it is difficult to comment on the accuracy of his deductions.⁷⁰⁶ Overall, he calculated that roughly 40% of the fourth century *magistri* had barbarian origins, and he guessed that the real number was probably lower because of the uncertainties in the 'Probable Barbarian' category. However, some barbarians may be disguised by the use of a Roman name, in the manner that the Alemanni general Serapio's original name was the more Germanic Agenarichus.⁷⁰⁷ This suggests that in actuality the barbarians might be under- rather than over-represented.⁷⁰⁸

Elton's work was the first to comprehensively approach the ethnic identities of all the *magistri militum* to assess whether it is possible the Roman army was weakened by increased barbarisation in this period. Elton's methodology included three procedures that are not significant

⁷⁰² Teitler 1989, 53. The *Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire* will be referred to as the *PLRE* from here onwards.

⁷⁰³ *PLRE*, 1112-14.

⁷⁰⁴ Teitler 1989, 54.

⁷⁰⁵ See note 474. Bacurius is also not counted as a *magister militum* in the *PLRE's fasti*, so we can conclude that he is at least one of the differences between Teitler's total and the total in the *fasti*.

⁷⁰⁶ Teitler 1989, 54.

⁷⁰⁷ Teitler 1989, 53; AM 16.12.25. Mallobaudes, see: *PLRE* 539.

⁷⁰⁸ Liebeschuetz 1990, 8; Elton 1996, 146.

problems on their own, but each slightly skewed the statistics in the same direction, which when aggregated, resulted in an over-representation of Roman *magistri*. Firstly, Elton decided to emphasise geographical provenance, which meant that any individual born within the limits of the Empire, even if they had barbarian heritage like Stilicho or Silvanus, was placed in the Roman groups.⁷⁰⁹ This is not an inherently incorrect choice, and was a method used previously to identify Romans.⁷¹⁰ However, this approach is too simplistic and does not consider important nuances, such as how far the Empire truly extended in a time when foreign peoples were being settled under their own laws and customs within the traditional borders of the Roman Empire.⁷¹¹ Furthermore, even if Stilicho and others had been born within the Empire, Roman authors still identified them as barbarians. Thus, this method of classification is an arbitrary use of geography and not based in the sources, and placed more *magistri* into the Roman categories.

The second methodological problem stems from the decision to create an additional category, labelled 'Others'. Elton populated this group with the non-European barbarians, such as those from Africa or Persia. He offers no explanation for why he chose to do this, or why he did not split the Romans along similar lines. For the fourth century there were only two in the 'Others' category, 3.33% of Elton's total. While this is a small percentage, when the total volume of verifiable data is so low, even a few percent becomes important, and splitting the barbarian categories in this manner resulted in the appearance of lower numbers of total barbarians.

The third and greatest problem with Elton's methodology stems from his process of populating the 'Probable Roman' group. Elton accepts a total of sixty *magistri* for the period of 350 to 399.⁷¹² He provides no list of who he included or excluded. Once he had filled the 'Certain Barbarian', 'Probable Barbarian', 'Others', and 'Certain Roman' categories, he allocated all the remaining men into the 'Probable Roman' group. This included neither critical assessment of the evidence, nor any justification for why they belonged in this category. For example, the sources contain no indication about the origins or ethnic identity of the *magister* Addaeus, nor is it possible to make a judgement based on information like contemporaries who share his name. Nonetheless, Elton includes Addaeus in the 'Probable Roman' category. This causes this group to be significantly larger than any other. Elton acknowledges that some of the individuals in this category are likely to

⁷⁰⁹ Elton 1996, 146.

⁷¹⁰ Teall 1965.

⁷¹¹ Geatrex and Stephen 2000.

⁷¹² Elton 1996, 148.

have been barbarians, but dismisses this problem as insignificant.⁷¹³ The research conducted during the course of this thesis, however, will show that this in fact had a significant effect on Elton's results.

The procedure employed by this project has been to divide all the *magistri* into the same categories that preceded it, that is 'Definite Barbarians', 'Definite Romans', 'Probable Barbarians', 'Probable Romans', and also to add a fifth group, 'Unattested'. A full categorisation of each individual assessed in this project can be found in the appendix. Of course, identity was not truly such a divisive binary; ethnicity was multi-layered and could change over time.⁷¹⁴ Furthermore, during the fourth as well as the following centuries, Roman identity became less important and was replaced with many regional identities.⁷¹⁵ While these groupings are imperfect, individuals must be assigned into more or less practical categories if a prosopographical study is to be conducted, and utilising these particular divisions will enable us to continue the investigation into the barbarisation of the late Roman army.

'Definite Barbarians' is the most simple category to populate. For example, Victor is said to come from "Sarmata", while many others are just described as belonging to one of the large groups of barbarians, such as the Goths or Franks.⁷¹⁶ Sometimes a specific origin is not given. For example, Ammianus related that Julian berated the memory of Constantine I for raising barbarians to the consulship, but then Ammianus names him a hypocrite because he raised Nevitta to the consulship.⁷¹⁷ Thus we do not know where he originated, but Nevitta must have been a barbarian. Other information comes from familial relations, such as when Gildo is described as the brother of Firmus, a member of the Moorish royal family.⁷¹⁸ The 'Definite Romans' category is slightly harder to fill, because few of the sources so clearly describe someone as a Roman. Timasius is described as such, but some of the other information is more circumstantial.⁷¹⁹ Marcellus is said to have been born in Serdica, and Abundantius and Sebastianus originated from the province of Thrace.⁷²⁰ As

⁷¹³ Elton 1996, 146.

⁷¹⁴ Bjornlie 2018, 82.

⁷¹⁵ Mathisen 2018.

⁷¹⁶ AM 31.12.6.

⁷¹⁷ AM 21.10.8, 21.12.25. Nevitta also has a Germanic name (Schönfeld 1911, 172) and was described as boring and brutish, common insults levelled at Germans (AM 21.10.8).

⁷¹⁸ AM 29.5.2, 5.6.

⁷¹⁹ Timasius: Joh. Ant. fr. 187.

⁷²⁰ Marcellus: AM 16.8.1. Abundantius: Zos. 5.10.5. Sebastianus: Athan. *Fest. Ind.* 353-4.

discussed above, those who became or were considered to be potential emperors also help expand this category.

The evidence is less definite about many other *magistri*, but we can apply onomastic analyses to better gauge their origins, and thus create ‘Probable’ categories. For example, we can see that ‘Merobaudes’ has the same termination as ‘Mallobaudes’, who was a known German.⁷²¹ Comparable relationships can be seen between the *magister* ‘Ellebichus’ and the German ‘Allobichus’, or ‘Dagalaifus’ and ‘Gadalaifus’, among many others.⁷²² A similar methodology can be applied to create a Probable Roman category. For example, there are 42 entries in the *PLRE* for the name ‘Eusebius’, with Eusebius 39 being our *magister militum*.⁷²³ The sources do not provide his place of origin, but we do know that Eusebius 10, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 24, and 40 were all native Romans, while only Eusebius 5 was a barbarian.⁷²⁴ Likewise, when looking at the entries for ‘Severus’ in the *PLRE*, we find 31 individuals with this name.⁷²⁵ Severus 8 and 10 were both *magistri militum*. We know that Severus 10, as well as 30, were Romans, and there are no known barbarians with the name Severus.⁷²⁶ On the basis of these analyses, we can conclude that the names ‘Eusebius’ and ‘Severus’, along with other names used by the *magistri*, were typically only used by Romans, and thus they fall into the ‘Probable Roman’ category. We can also look for other context clues in the sources. For example, when describing Gratian’s campaign in 378 against the Lentienses, Ammianus writes that Nannienus and Mallobaudes were given command, and he distinguished Nannienus as virtuous and Mallobaudes as a Frank.⁷²⁷ While this is not an explicit statement that Nannienus was a Roman, the juxtaposition is a strong implication that he was.

It is apparent that this is not a foolproof method; as mentioned, Serapio’s original name was the more Germanic Agenarichus.⁷²⁸ This shows that barbarians did not always have barbarian names, and the same may apply to the Romans. This has been noticed by modern academics as a flaw in this methodology, but it is nevertheless agreed that onomastics still represents an important

⁷²¹ AM 31.10.6.

⁷²² These relationships can be identified by Schönfeld 1911, which has been an invaluable source for this project.

⁷²³ *PLRE* 301-8.

⁷²⁴ Eusebius 27 was a descendent of Odaenathus, but seeing as he lived a century after the Palmyrene king he would have been considered a Roman.

⁷²⁵ *PLRE*, 831-38.

⁷²⁶ *Aur. Vict. Caes.* 40.1.

⁷²⁷ AM 31.10.6.

⁷²⁸ See page 130.

source of information, because is it often the only instrument we have.⁷²⁹ Having so many methods for populating the different categories can lead to oversights and biases. Thus, when making final conclusions about the origins of the *magistri*, it will be important to acknowledge the trends revealed by the 'Definite' categories alone, and then see if the 'Probable' categories offer support or contradiction.

The final group is labelled as 'Unattested' and comprises those individuals where no information can be deduced about their place of origin. This group includes some quite important and influential individuals such as Arbitio, and others that only feature briefly in the sources, such as Quintinus or Majorianus. All these individuals of course came from somewhere, and if it could be discovered that this group was mostly Roman or mostly barbarian it would greatly change the results, but this will likely always be a mystery. The argument could be made that the ancient sources were more likely to record the barbarian origins of an individual rather than Roman origins, and this appears somewhat true. As can be seen in the appendix, eleven barbarians are recorded specifically as such in the sources, while only two Romans are recorded as clearly. This could lead one to believe many of the 'Unattested' were Romans. However, we must wonder if this is actually correct, seeing as there were also eleven *magistri* who were probably barbarians but the sources do not explicitly say so. Additionally, the other methods of identifying 'Definite Romans' help to compensate for this difference in the sources. Thus, we cannot be certain the sources were more thorough in recording barbarians, and therefore cannot be too overreaching in making assumptions about the 'Unattested' category.

Using the detailed breakdown of the results of the different studies available in Table Three, we can see that, overall, the ethnic identities of the *magistri* is a quite well-documented topic. Of the fifty-two individuals considered to be *magistri*, only twenty-one percent have no information that we can use to deduce their origin. Some of these men, such as Addaeus and Quintinus, have unique names not shared by anyone else in the fourth century and are not onomastically identifiable. Others, such as Arbitio, Barbatio, and Jovinus, share their names with other individuals, but no ethnic identifier is recorded for them either. To place them into one of the categories would be guesswork based on no evidence, and they must be left in the unknown group.

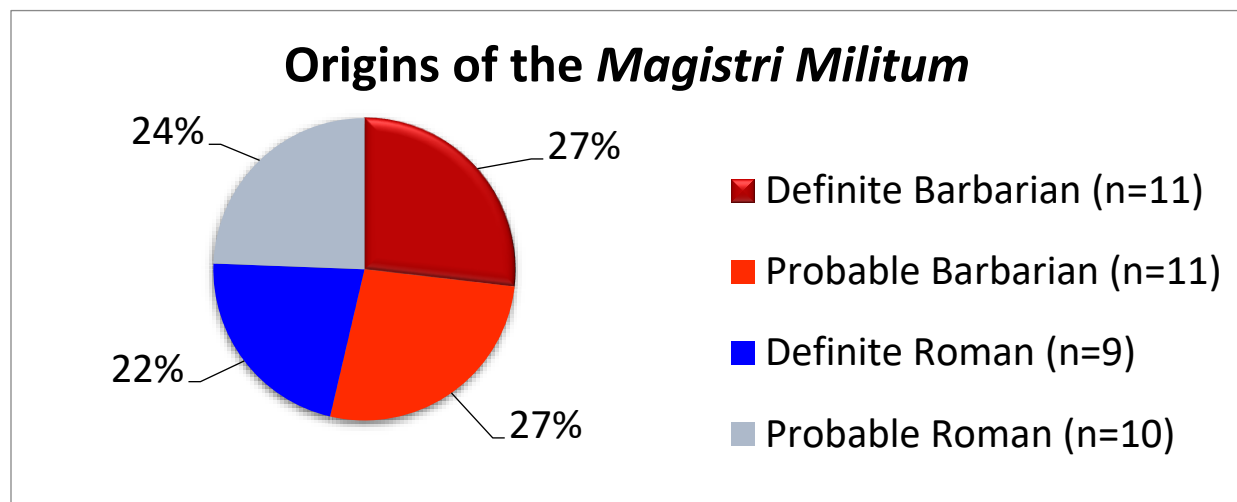
⁷²⁹ Pohl 1998, 10; Parnell 2017, 51.

Table Three. A comparison of Teitler 1989, Elton 1996, and the present study's results on the distribution of barbarian and Roman *magistri militum*.

	Teitler (1989)	Elton (1996)	Bendle
Definite Barbarians	23%	17% ⁷³⁰	21%
Probable Barbarians	17%	17%	21%
Definite Romans		23%	18%
Probable Romans		43%	19%
Unattested			21%
Total	60 (342 to 392 CE)	60 (350 to 399 CE)	52 (342 to 392 CE)

Table Three shows that the data is split fairly evenly across all five sets. Additionally, from Figure Four below, which displays the data without the 'Unattested' category, we can see that the four other categories are divided almost into even quarters. There are slightly more in both 'Barbarian' categories compared to the 'Roman' ones, with the lowest category being 'Definite Romans'. This therefore suggests that a *magister militum* in the fourth century was approximately as likely to be a barbarian as he was to be a Roman, and therefore the highest rank of the Roman military was thoroughly barbarised.⁷³¹ Furthermore, the results are consistent if we apply either only the 'Definite' categories, or the 'Definite' and 'Probable' together.

Figure Four. Pie graph of the origins of the *magistri militum*.



⁷³⁰ This number combines Elton's 'Barbarian' and 'Other' categories.

⁷³¹ Waas 1971, 6, came to this same conclusion, although without explaining his methodology or providing a list of names, only stating that there were twenty barbarians and forty-four total *magistri militum* in the same time period.

3.3.3 Discussion

The calculations carried out and displayed were reached by assigning an equal value to all the *magistri*. This means that the *magistri* with the least power and influence, such as Malarichus or Rumoridus, receive the same value as the most important and powerful, such as Arbogast or Stilicho. The *magistri* Sebastianus and Theodosius, who were only in the office for a few weeks or months, receive the same value as Victor or Stilicho, who were both *magistri* for seventeen years. This method, while illuminating, lacks the context that is necessary to fully understand the nature of the *magistri*.⁷³² Therefore we will now explore some of the traits this study has identified that were shared by the *magistri* who had the most profound effect upon the changing nature of the *magisterium*.

As can be seen in Figure Five, the *magistri* were fairly evenly divided between Romans and barbarians before 375. There were seven barbarian *magistri* in the west and four more in the east, for a total of eleven identifiable barbarians.⁷³³ There were slightly more Romans during the same period and they were more evenly divided between the two halves of the Empire, with six in the east and seven in the west.⁷³⁴ Arbitio was the longest serving and most influential *magister* of this period as a result of his close association with emperor Constantius, but we remain unaware of his origins. Ursicinus and Victor also had long magisterial careers and occupied influential positions, and they were both barbarians. We can also see the importance of barbarian *magistri* in this period: four consulships were given to Romans, while six were received by barbarians.⁷³⁵ Thus, while the barbarians were important in the earliest days of recorded *magistri*, it still seems they were outnumbered by Romans at this time.

The period from 375 to 395 saw an increase of only a single extra barbarian *magister*. Because the total number of eastern *magistri* increased during these years, while the western *magisterium* decreased, the barbarian *magistri* were more common in the east, with seven individuals (including Victor who crosses both periods) and only five in the west. However, the same period saw only half that number of Romans, with four in the east and only three in the west

⁷³² Ie. Demandt 1970, 785.

⁷³³ These were Salia, Ursicinus, Gaiso, Silvanus, Gomoarius, Agilo, Nevitta, Malarichus, Dagalaifus, Victor, and Arinthaesus.

⁷³⁴ These were Hermogenes, Bonosus, Sallustius, Eusebius, Vetranio, Romulus, Marcellus, Severus 8, Sabinianus, Lupicinus, Aequitius, Severus 10, and Flavius Theodosius.

⁷³⁵ Only two were given to *magistri* in the 'Unattested' category.

(including Flavius Theodosius who also crosses both periods). This suggests that the importance and dominance of barbarian *magistri* grew in this later period across both halves of the Empire. The importance of the barbarian *magistri* is also supported by the distribution of consulships. Barbarians received four, or five if Merobaudes' third consulship is historical, while the Romans only received three.

Thus, the evidence suggests that the ratio of barbarian to Roman *magistri militum* changed slightly in favour of barbarians over the period examined. Even more significantly, the most powerful barbarian *magistri* existed towards the end of the period. While most of the *magistri* were powerful, some of them, like Promotus or Butherichus, did not have the power and influence to protect themselves from the attacks of other individuals or groups.⁷³⁶ Others, such as Rumoridus, were unable to gain enough personal power to operate with any discernible agency. Even some of the more powerful *magistri*, such as Arbitio, only had limited successes in furthering their personal agendas. Merobaudes, Arbogast, and Stilicho, however, stand out as having obtained for themselves a massive degree of personal power and agency. All three *magistri* were at various times able to take initiatives to further their own plans and goals. These particularly powerful *magistri* have three traits in common: they had long magisterial careers, they reached the peak of their power in the western Empire, and they were barbarians. We will visit each of these factors and explain how they contributed to the success of these *magistri*.

⁷³⁶ Soz 7.25.3; Ruf. *HE* 2.18; Zos. 4.51.3; Claud. *de cons. Stil.* 1.94-6, in Ruf. 1.316-17.

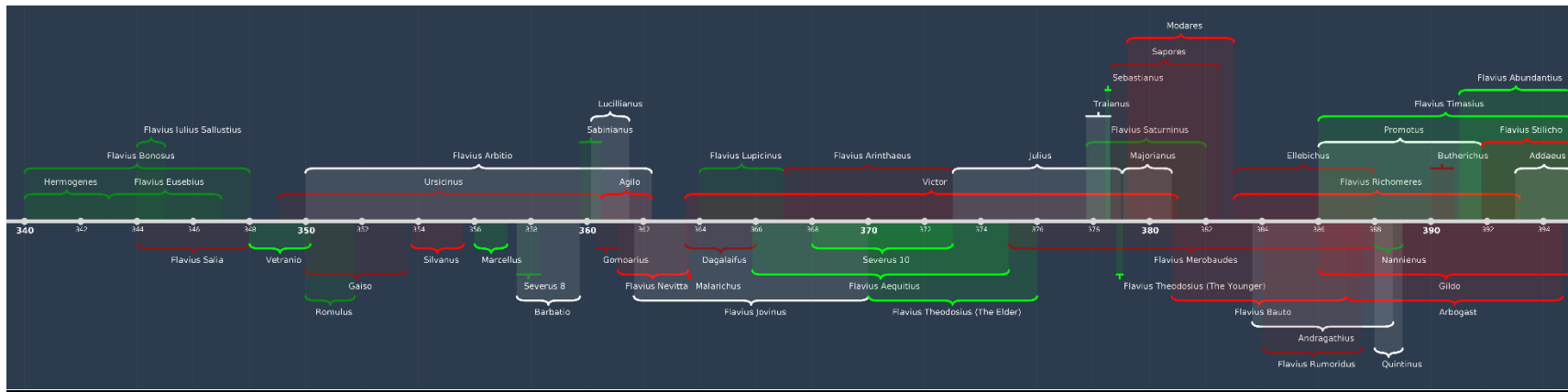


Figure Five. The Ethnic Identities of the *Magistri Militum*. Bright green indicates 'Certain Romans', dark green for 'Probable Romans'. Bright red is used for 'Certain Barbarians', and dark red for 'Probably Barbarians', and finally white shows 'Unattested'. Those above the white centre line served primarily in the east, while those below it served in the west. As with Figure Two, this image is not intended to be an absolutely accurate reference for the dates and places the fourth century *magistri* were in office, but only to help illustrate the conclusions of this discussion of the different origins of the *magistri*.

While there are difficulties in applying modern military theories to ancient armies, there is perhaps a valid comparison to be made when it comes to magisterial turnover rates. It is a feature of armies in the modern western world to practice regular job rotation in the upper military ranks. For example, Australian military scholars theorise that high job rotation is important for developing an officer's adaptability and breadth of experience.⁷³⁷ The United States military also mandates that its upper officers must either retire after five years in a rank or a certain number total years of service, and no Chief of Staff of the Army, a four-star general position somewhat similar to a *magister militum*, has remained in office longer than four years since World War II.⁷³⁸ Furthermore, the US Defense Officer Personnel Management Act of 1980 instructs that any officer twice passed over for promotion is to be dismissed from service, and there are limits on how many generals of particular ranks can serve concurrently.⁷³⁹ This guarantees a high rate of turnover for upper military officers, and it contrasts with the typical model of the militaries of modern autocratic dictatorships. Obviously, the same level of strategic information is not as freely available from dictatorships, but outside observation still allows us to see examples of individuals like Oh Jin-Woo, who was an extremely decorated officer in the North Korean army of Kim Il-sung, and he remained the supreme administrator of the DPRK's military for twenty-three years.⁷⁴⁰ In this position he was one of the most powerful individuals of the North Korean regime. Similarly, since 2014, Thailand has been under the rule of Prayut Chan-o-cha, who rose through the powerful Queen's Guard units and had been a military commander for twelve years before overthrowing the government in a coup d'état.⁷⁴¹ Of course, examples of all kinds can be found in the modern world, and some military men conducted successful coups without long careers, but a pattern of longer careers equalling a greater chance to secure power can be seen.

Thus it seems that there may be some correlation between lengthy military careers and securing dominant political positions in the modern world, and the fact that we can see similarly long careers held by some of the most controlling fourth century *magistri* might help explain their power. Before 365, the emperors had maintained a fairly rapid rate of turnover, with most *magistri* only serving a few years in office. However, this changed with the brothers Valentinian and Valens, and the most powerful *magistri* began to secure significantly longer careers. Stilicho's spanned seventeen years, Merobaudes' thirteen, and even Arbogast's shorter career of

⁷³⁷ Jans and Frazer-Jans 2001, 47; Masland and Radway 1957.

⁷³⁸ Gardner 2005.

⁷³⁹ 10 U.S. Code § 525.

⁷⁴⁰ Wudunn, Sheryl, 'O Jin U, the Defense Minister of North Korea, is Dead at 77' *New York Times*, 26 Feb. 1995; Bradly 2004, 61-62.

⁷⁴¹ "Gen Prayut Chan-o-cha: Fighting to Protect his Legacy", *Thai PBS World*, 13 Mar., 2019.

eight years is longer than most of the *magistri*, the average being only five years. Such time would have easily afforded these *magistri* the opportunity to gather a great deal of personal power. Furthermore, specific regulations were made to grant greater influence to those who held magisterial power for long periods.⁷⁴² Interestingly, the eastern Roman, or Byzantine Empire, which survived the fifth century unlike the western Empire, continued to frequently rotate its highest-ranking generals.⁷⁴³

Another related important factor in securing a long career may have been the barbarian origins of these *magistri*. The careers of the Roman-native *magistri* Timasius and Abundantius indicate that long tenures were not exclusive to the barbarians, but there may have been reasons that the barbarian *magistri* were predisposed to such long careers. As discussed earlier, barbarian *magistri* could not become long term legitimate emperors, whereas Roman *magistri* could. Therefore, if a barbarian sought power for themselves, the *magisterium* was one of, if not the, highest and most powerful position they could hold. Conversely, Romans could aspire to progress into the imperial office. Such was the case with Theodosius, who became a *magister* in 378. If he remained in that position under Gratian, he could have very likely presented a strong challenge to Merobaudes' dominance of the west. However, he advanced to become the emperor of the east and this left Merobaudes alone in the powerful position he would retain for another eight years. Similarly, if Stilicho was also prohibited from becoming emperor, then all he could do to advance his own position was continue to gather power in the position of *magister militum*, and there is some indication he did so by reforming the western military to concentrate more of the armies under his official control.⁷⁴⁴

The final unique quality which seemed to have contributed to the success of these *magistri* was service in the court of the western Empire, specifically at the court of the more powerful emperor when there were multiple concurrent rulers. The *magistri* serving there remained unfettered by the same restrictions that hindered their eastern counterparts. Emperors Valens first significantly expanded his *magisterium* during the Gothic crisis, and then emperor Theodosius retained and further expanded his own *magisterium* both after the defeat at Adrianople and in light of the two civil wars the plagued the final decade of his reign. This meant that the eastern armies, and the power and influence they offered, were divided amongst five separate generals. At the same time, Rufinus gained a great deal of power first as *magister officiorum* and then as Praetorian Prefect. His power and agency was equivalent to that of some

⁷⁴² See page 58.

⁷⁴³ Parnell 2012, 7-9.

⁷⁴⁴ Mommsen 1889, 265.

of the western *magistri* in that he was able to eliminate his enemies and secure his own supremacy.⁷⁴⁵ Combined with the dilution of military power, this meant Rufinus eclipsed all of the east's *magistri*, and even after his downfall in late 395 his powerful position was taken over by the eunuch Eutropius rather than one of the generals.⁷⁴⁶ Conversely, from the death of Valentinian I and the rise of Merobaudes, regimes in the western Empire were dominated by only one *magister* who was able to exert extreme levels of control over almost all the western armies and thereby gain massive amounts of power.

As we can see, long careers, barbarian origins, and serving in the western Empire were extremely important factors that combined to provide powerful opportunities to a select few *magistri*. Other factors, such as Stilicho's membership to the Theodosian imperial family, probably also helped these *magistri* gain power, but these three factors were held in common between the most powerful generals and seem to have played a significant role. Other *magistri* did not fulfil all these same factors during their time in office, and they did not gain as much power. Others still, such as Bauto and Gildo, met all three elements, but had their ability to exert power challenged in other ways: Bauto's power was limited by others at court and the weakness of Valentinian II's Italian army, while Gildo's ability to influence political matters was limited by his station in Africa, although in the fifth century this would not pose such a problem to other *magistri*.⁷⁴⁷ It is important, however, to acknowledge that none of these *magistri* had ultimate, unassailable power. Merobaudes lost his preeminent position when a powerful new emperor, Magnus Maximus, emerged; Arbogast was defeated in civil war; and Stilicho was assassinated by other court officials. Nonetheless, these *magistri* were some of the most powerful people in the fourth century.

In conclusion, the evidence that can be gleaned about the origins of the *magistri militum* of the fourth century suggests that the highest rank of the Roman army employed as many barbarians as it did Romans. This conclusion is attained through many different methods of gathering data, and is supported if we look at only those we are certain about, or also those we are less sure of. Furthermore, being a barbarian *magister* combined with a long career in the western Empire afforded enormous opportunities for power and agency. This may have important implications for the collapse of the western and the survival of the eastern Empire in the fifth century.

⁷⁴⁵ See page 84.

⁷⁴⁶ For Eutropius' career, see *PLRE* II, 440-44.

⁷⁴⁷ Ie. Bonifatius. See: Wijnendaele 2015.

Conclusion

This thesis combined narrative analysis with statistical research to provide a deep understanding of how the role of the *magistri militum* changed in the fourth century. Previous scholarship has generally been devoted to the reconstruction of the *magistri* as an institution, with a focus on questions about the creation of the office, the development and implementation of new positions and titles, and its internal hierarchy. While all these works have acknowledged the importance of the *magistri*, the institutional perspective overshadowed the role of individuals. By synthesising archontology, prosopography, and analytical-narrative history, this thesis has gone beyond the previous view and argued that there were certain decisive moments in the fourth century that were taken advantage of by particular *magistri* to not only change the powers they wielded, but the power wielded by the emperors as well.

Looking at the first *magistri* that appeared in the historical record, Chapter One argued that the strong, powerful emperors like Constantius and Julian were able to effectively maintain their control over the *magistri*. The generals were kept in their intended role of commanding Roman armies and carrying out the orders of the emperors. This included defending the Empire from Alemannic, Sarmatian, and Persian attacks, overthrowing usurpers, and carrying out the emperors' religious policies. Two *magistri* attempted to usurp imperial power, a strategy that had become almost common for high ranking military men in the third century. However, both Vetricianus and Silvanus were somewhat forced into usurping because of circumstance, and neither seemed to take the necessary actions for success, and both usurpations subsequently failed. Other *magistri*, such as Arbiter, tried to increase their power by influencing and advising the emperors, yet this also did not find significant success in the early period. The *magistri* also tried to take advantage of the power vacuum that followed the death of emperor Julian in 363, but their chance was squandered because of an inability to find a suitable candidate quickly.

Chapter Two showed that in the span of three decades, key opportunities were taken advantage of by the *magistri* to greatly change the nature of their relationship to the emperors. We cannot be certain to what extent the *magistri* were involved in the election of Valentinian I as emperor in 364, but it is clear that he favoured their interests over the course of his reign. He increased the importance of the consulship at the same time that he awarded a greater number of them to the *magistri* than ever before. He also afforded the *magistri* greater flexibility and freedom when on campaign. The greatest change, however, occurred after Valentinian died unexpectedly in 375. Merobaudes' position as the sole *magister militum* on the Danube allowed

him to take an important role in deciding a successor. To what extent his barbarian heritage precluded him from making himself emperor, whether he decided that remaining a *magister militum* would afford him more power, or whether other factors played into his decision, is a question we may never be able to answer. What is clear is that Merobaudes had learned from the mistakes of the previous succession crises, and he acted quickly to find a candidate that was acceptable to the rank-and-file soldiery in his army, as well as the incumbent emperors, Gratian and Valens. In stark contrast to the 364 succession, where the infant son of emperor Jovian was not considered, and Salutius Secundus declined the offer for his son on account of the boy's youth, Merobaudes' solution was to raise the four-year old son of the Valentinian I as emperor. By raising Valentinian II, Merobaudes set the Empire down a new path, one where the emperor did not need to be the military leader that previous emperors had been, either in truth or symbolically. Instead, it became acceptable for the emperor to remain in the central provinces in highly defensible cities, attending to ceremonial and religious duties, while the *magistri* competed over control of the armies.

Merobaudes did not intend to use Valentinian II to challenge Gratian's control of the west, but was instead content to work with Gratian and to become the western Empire's most powerful general. Although he did not dictate all policies, Merobaudes was able to contravene Gratian's order to the military with impunity. Valentinian II, however, remained unable to free himself from the control of others. After Merobaudes defected to Magnus Maximus' regime in 383, Bauto became the primary *magister militum* of the legitimate western court, but his power was inhibited by the weak position of the Italian army. When Valentinian was later installed as the west's sole ruler, Theodosius placed him in the care of Arbogast, who elevated his position to have absolute control over the emperor. This makes it clear that the *magistri* were able to exert more power during the reigns of weak emperors. From the imperial court in Gaul, Arbogast placed his personal lackeys and sycophants into all levels of the bureaucracy, and ensured the soldiers were loyal to him personally. This worked so well that Valentinian could not even publicly dismiss Arbogast in his own court. Thus, it was not the legal or institutional reforms that changed the office, but it was the *magistri* who took advantage of certain key events that placed greater power in their hands.

By the end of the period under examination here, powerful *magistri* had become such an entrenched feature of the western Roman Empire, that Theodosius designated another *magister militum*, Stilicho, to be the guardian of his son, the young emperor Honorius. Although Stilicho's power was challenged by other powerful officials in both the eastern and western halves of the Empire, he represents the solidification of the power of the *magistri* that developed over the

fourth century, and generals more powerful than the emperors would remain a key feature of the last decades of Roman hegemony in western Europe. Conversely, civil officials occupied a similarly powerful position in the eastern Empire, while the eastern army was divided amongst five *magistri*. These two factors ensured that no single general emerged as the de facto ruler there in the same manner that they did in the west.

Through comparing several characteristics of the *magistri* through the prosopographical method, Chapter Three added another dimension to this discussion. It was intended that an examination of their religious beliefs would reveal more about the important role they played in the theologically tumultuous fourth century. However, while there is ample evidence of their involvement in religious affairs, the evidence for their beliefs is remarkably thin, and we can only identify the religion of a few *magistri*. Fortunately, evidence for the military hierarchy is more abundant. By comparing the successive offices *magistri* held prior to reaching the office, the career path that aspiring military officers progressed through was reconstructed. This shed further light on the fourth century military and helps bridge the space between earlier and later career structures. The final prosopographical analysis on the ethnic backgrounds of the *magistri* proved the most illuminating. Previous studies on the topic had concluded that there were fewer barbarian *magistri* than Romans. However, a new methodological approach conducted with a comprehensive understanding of the nuances of ancient ethnicity indicates that there were approximately as many barbarian *magistri* as there were Roman *magistri*.

It also became clear that the most powerful *magistri* shared particular important traits. Merobaudes, Arbogast, and Stilicho seem to have had the perfect combination of favourable circumstances and a willingness to take advantage of them. Each had a long career, reached the peak of their power in the imperial court of the western Empire, and all were barbarians. The combination of these factors did not inherently grant power; other *magistri* met these characteristics but did not gain such powerful positions. Nor did these factors ensure continued power, as all three men eventually fell in different circumstances. However, the fact that the three most powerful *magistri* of the fourth century shared these three significant traits cannot be dismissed as a coincidence.

By charting the role *magistri* played in the pivotal events of the fourth century's military history, and adding the conclusions derived from prosopographical analysis, this thesis hopefully contributed to a topic that has not yet been fully explored by historians. This is by no means a full, exhaustive exploration of this phenomenon, nor are its conclusions beyond doubt. Other formats, such as network analysis, will be able to shed further light on these issues. Time

and space, however, have both placed restrictions upon what could be achieved here. Nevertheless, this thesis has hopefully gathered and analysed the evidence and proposed the convincing argument that in the fourth century there was a confluence of opportunities with men ready to take advantage of them. This resulted in a rapid change in the military and political landscape that set the tone for the western Empire's final demise.

Bibliography

Abbreviations and Ancient Sources

- AM Ammianus Marcellinus. *Rerum gestarum libri qui supersunt*. C.U. Clark (ed.), 2 vols. 1910; reprint, Berlin, 1963; cf. *Ammianus Marcellinus*. J. C. Rolfe (trans.) 3 vols. Cambridge, Mass., 1935-39.
- Acta synhodorum habitarum Romae* *Acta synhodorum habitarum Romae*, in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica: AA 12*: 393-455. T. Mommsen (ed.). Berlin, 1894.
- AE *L'Année épigraphique*. Paris, 1888-.
- Amb. *De ob. Theod.* Ambrose. *De obitu Theodosii: Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum 73*: 39-401. O. Faller (ed.). 1955.
- Amb. *De ob. Val. Iun.* Ambrose. *De obitu Valentiniani: Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum 73*: 327-67. O. Faller (ed.). 1955.
- Amb. *Ep.* Ambrose. *Epistulae: Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum 82.1*. O. Faller (ed.). 1968: books 1-6; *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum 82.2*. M. Zelzer (ed.). 1990: books 7-9; *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum 82.3*. M. Zelzer (ed.). 1982: book 10 and *Epistulae extra collectionem*.
- Athan. *Apol. De fuga* Athanasius. *Apologia de fuga sua*. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (eds.). New York, 1892.
- Athan. *Fest. Ep.* Athanasius. *Festal Letters* (Syriac), in *The Festal Epistles of S. Athanasius*. W. Cureton (trans.), Oxford, 1854.
- Athan. *Fest. Ind.* Athanasius. *Index to the Festal Epistles*. H. Burgess (trans.), A. Robertson (rev.). New York, 1892.
- Athan. *Hist. Ar.* Athanasius. *Historia Arianorum ad Monachos*. M. Atkinson (trans.), A. Robertson (rev.). New York, 1892.
- Aug. c. *Lit. Petil.* Augustine. *Contra Litteras Petiliani Donatistae Cortensis, Episcopi*. J. R. King (trans.). Buffalo, 1887.
- Aur. Vic. *Caes.* Aurelius Victor. *Liber de caesaribus*. F. Pichlmayr (ed.). Leipzig, 1961; cf. *Aurelius Victor: De Caesaribus*, H. W. Bird (trans.). Liverpool, 1994.

- Aus. *Grat. Act.* Ausonius. *Gratiarum Actio ad Gratiarum*, in *Ausonius*. H. G. Evelyn-White (ed. and trans.), 2 vols. Cambridge, Mass., 1919–21; cf. *Decimi Magni Ausonii opera*. R. P. H. Green (ed.). Oxford, 1991.
- Bas. *Ep.* Basil. *Lettres*. Y. Courtonne (ed. and trans.), 3 vols. Paris, 1957–66; cf. *St. Basil: The Letters*. R. J. Deferrari (trans.), 4 vols. Cambridge, Mass., 1926–34.
- BGU *Aegyptische Urkunden aus den staatlichen Museen zu Berlin, Griechische Urkunden*. Berlin, 1892–2005.
- Bull. *Comm.* *Bullettino della Commissione archeologica comunale di Roma*. Rome, 1872–.
- Caes. *B. Gal.* Julius Caesar. *De bello Gallico*. F. P. Long (trans.). Oxford, 1911.
- Cass. *Cassiodori Senatoris chronica ad. a DXIX. Chronica Minora 2: 109–61*. T. Mommsen (ed.), 3 vols. Berlin, 1892–98.
- Cass. Dio. Dio Cassius. *Historia Romana*. L. Dindorf (ed.), 5 vols. Leipzig, 1863–65.
- Chron. *Edess.* *Chronicon Edessenum: Corpus scriptorum Christianorum orientalium SS 3.4.1. I. Guidi* (ed.). Paris, 1903.
- Chron. *Min.* *Chronica minora*, in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica: AA IX, XI, XIII*. T. Mommsen (ed.). Berlin: 1892–98.
- CIL *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*. T. Mommsen et al. (eds.). Berlin, 1863–.
- Claud. *de bello Gild.* Claudius Claudianus. *De Bello Gildonico*, in *Claudian*. M. Plautnauer (ed. and trans.), 2 vols. Cambridge, Massa., 1972–76.
- Claud. *de cons. Stil.* Claudius Claudianus. *De Consulatu Stilichonis*, in *Claudian*. M. Plautnauer (ed. and trans.), 2 vols. Cambridge, Massa., 1972–76.
- Claud. *De iv cons. Hon.* Claudius Claudianus. *Panegyricus de Quarto Consulatu Honorii Augusti*, in *Claudian*. M. Plautnauer (ed. and trans.), 2 vols. Cambridge, Massa., 1972–76.
- Claud. *III cons. Hon.* Claudius Claudianus. *Panegyricus de Tertio Consulatu Honorii Augusti*, in *Claudian*. M. Plautnauer (ed. and trans.), 2 vols. Cambridge, Massa., 1972–76.
- Claud. *in Ruf.* Claudius Claudianus. *In Rufinum*, in *Claudian*. M. Plautnauer (ed. and trans.), 2 vols. Cambridge, Massa., 1972–76.
- Cons. *Const.* *Consularia Constantinopolitana*, in *The Chronicle of Hydatius and the Consularia Constantinopolitana: Two Contemporary Accounts of the Final Years of the Roman Empire*. R.W. Burgess (ed. and trans.). Oxford, 1993.

- Contin. Havn.* *Constinatio Havniensis Prosperi*, in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica: AA IX*: 298-339. T. Mommsen (ed.). Berlin, 1892.
- CTh.* *Theodosiani libri xvi cum constitutionibus Sirmondianis*. T. Mommsen, P. Meyer, et al. (eds.) Berlin, 1905; reprint, Hildesheim, 1990; cf. *Codex Theodosianus: The Theodosian Code and Novels and the Sirmondian Constitutions (including the Minutes of the Senate: Gesta Senatus urbis Romae)*. C. Pharr (trans.) New York, 1952.
- Dion. Hal. Rom. Ant.* Dionysius of Halicarnassus. *The Roman antiquities of Dionysius of Halicarnassus*. E. Cray (trans.). Cambridge, Massa., 1937.
- Epit.* *Epitome de caesaribus*, in *Sexti Aurelii Victoris Liber De Caesaribus*. F. Pichlmayr (ed.), 131-76. Leipzig, 1966.
- Eun.* Eunapius. *Universal History*, in *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians of the Later Roman Empire: Eunapius, Olympiodorus, Priscus, and Malchus*. R. C. Blockley (ed. and trans.), vol. 2, Liverpool 1983.
- Eus. HE.* Eusebius. *Eusebius: The Ecclesiastical History*. H. J. Lawlor (ed.), J. E. L. Oulton (trans.), 2 vols. London, 1942.
- Eus. V. Const.* Eusebius. *Vita Constantini*, in *Eusebius Werke 1.1, Über das Leben des Kaisers Konstantin*. F. Winkelmann (ed.), Berlin, 1975; *Eusebius, Life of Constantine*. Av. Cameron and S. G. Hall (trans.), Oxford, 1999.
- Eutr.* Eutropius. *Breviarum ab urbe condita*. C. Santini (ed.). Leipzig, 1897.
- Excerpt. Val.* *Excerpta Valesiana*. J. Moreau (ed.). Leipzig, 1968.
- Fast. Vind. Prior.* *Fasti Vindobonenses Posteriores*, in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica: AA IX*. T. Mommsne (ed.). Berlin, 1892.
- Faust. Byz.* Faustus of Byzantium. *P'awstosi Buzandac'woy Patmut'iwn Hayoc'*. K. Patkanean (ed.), R. Bedrosian (trans.). New York, 1985.
- Festus* Festus. *The Breviarium of Festus: A Critical Edition with Historical Commentary*. J. W. Eadie (ed.). London, 1967.
- Greg. Naz. Ep.* Gregory of Nazianzus. *Lettres*. P. Gallay (ed. and trans.), 2 vols. Paris, 1964-67.
- Greg. Naz. Or.* Gregory of Nazianzus. *Discours 20-23: Sources Chrétiennes 270*. J. Mossay (ed. and trans.). 1980.
- Greg. Tur. HF* Gregory of Tours. *History of the Franks*, in *Gregorii Turronensis Opera*, in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*. W. Arndt and B. Krusch (eds.). Hanover,

- 1884; cf. *Gregory of Tours, History of the Franks*. L. Thorpe (trans.). London, 1974.
- Herod. Herodian. *Herodian of Antioch's History of the Roman Empire*. E. Echols (trans.). Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1961.
- ICUR *Inscriptiones Christianae Urbis Romae*. G. B. de Rossi (ed.), 2 vols. Rome, 1857-61.
- ILCV *Inscriptiones Latinae Christianae Veteres*. E. Diehl (ed.). Berlin, 1925.
- ILS *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae*. H. Dessau (ed.). Berlin, 1892-1916.
- j. Ber *Tractate Berkahot*, in *The Jerusalem Talmud: First Order, Zeraïm Tractate Berakhot*. H. Guggenheimer (ed., trans., and comm.). Berlin, 2000.
- j. Shebi *Tractate Sevi'it*, in *The Jerusalem Talmud: First Order, Zeraïm Tractates Kilaim and Seviit*. H. Guggenheimer (ed., trans., and comm.). Berlin, 2001.
- j. Yeb *Tractate Yebamot*, in *The Jerusalem Talmud: Third Order: Nasim, Tractate Yebamot*. H. Guggenheimer (ed., trans., and comm.). Berlin, 2004.
- Jer. Chron. Jerome. *Chronicon*, in *Eusebius Werke 7*. R. Helm and U. Treu (eds.), 3rd edn. Berlin, 1984.
- Jer. Ep. Jerome. *Epistulae*, in *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum 54-56*. I. Hilberg (ed.). 1910-18.
- Joh. Ant. John of Antioch. *Historiarum Fragmenta*, in *Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum 4*: 535-622. K. Müller (ed.), 5 vols. Paris, 1868.
- Joh. Lyd. *de mag.* John Lydus. *De magistratibus populi romani libri tres: On Powers, or, The Magistrates of the Roman State*. A. Bandy (ed., trans., and comm.). Philadelphia, 1983.
- Jord. Get. Jordanes. *Getica*, in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica: AA V*: 53-138. T. Mommsen (ed.). 1882.
- Jord. Rom. Jordanes. *Romana*, in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica: AA V*: 1-52. T. Mommsen (ed.). 1882.
- Jul. Ep. ad Ath. Julian. *Letter to the Senate and People of Athens*, in *The Works of the Emperor Julian*. W. C. Wright (ed. and trans.), 3 vols. Cambridge, Mass., 1913.
- Jul. Or. Julian. *Oeuvres completes*. J. Bidez, C. Lacombrade, and G. Rochefort (ed. and trans.), 4 vols. Paris, 1932-64.

- Julian Romance.* *Iulianos der Abtruennige. Syrische Erzaehlungen.* J. G. E. Hoffman (ed.). Leiden, 1880; cf. *Julian the Apostate. Now translated for the first time from the Syriac original.* H. Gollancz (trans.). London, 1928.
- Lact. Mort. Pers.* Lactantius. *De mortibus persecutorum.* J. L. Creed (ed. and trans.). Oxford, 1984.
- Lib. Ep.* Libanius. *Opera*, vols. 10 and 11. H. Foerster (ed.), 12 vols. Leipzig, 1963-85; cf. *Autobiography and Selected Letters.* A. F. Norman (ed. and trans.), 2 vols. Cambridge, Mass., 1992.
- Lib. Or.* Libanius. *Opera*, vols. 1, 2, 3, and 4. H. Foerster (ed.), 12 vols. Leipzig, 1963; cf. *Selected Orations.* A. F. Norman (ed. and trans.), 2 vols. Cambridge, Mass., 1969-77.
- Livy* Livy. *History of Rome.* B. O. Foster (ed. and trans.), 14 vols. Cambridge, Mass., 1919.
- Marc. com.* *Chronicon*, in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica: AA XI: 37-108.* T. Mommsen (ed.). 1894; cf. *Marcellinus Comes. The Chronicle of Marcellinus.* B. Croke (ed., trans., and comm.). Sydney, 1995.
- Menander* Menander Rhetor. *Menander Rhetor.* D. A. Russell and N. G. Wilson (ed. and trans.). Oxford, 1981.
- Mos. Chor.* Moses Khorenats'i. *History of the Armenians.* R. W. Thomson (trans.). Cambridge, Mass., 1978.
- Nic. Cal. HE* Nicephorus Callistus Xanthopoulos. *Ecclesiasticae Historiae.* J-P. Migne (ed. and trans.). 1865.
- Not. Dig. Occ.* *Notitia Dignitatum in partibus Occidentis*, in *Notitia Dignitatum.* O. Seeck (ed.). Berlin, 1876.
- Olymp.* Olympiodorus. *Fragments*, in *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians of the Later Roman Empire: Eunapius, Olympiodorus, Priscus and Malchus.* R. C. Blockley (ed. and trans.) Liverpool, 1983.
- Oros.* Orosius. *Historiarum adversum paganos libri VII: Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum 5.* K. Zangemeister (ed.). 1882 ; cf. *Paulus Orosius: the Seven Books of History Against the Pagans.* R. J. Deferrari (trans.). Washington, DC, 1964.
- P. Abinn.* *The Abbinaeus Archive: Papers of a Roman Officer in the Reign of Constantius II.* H. I. Bell et al. (eds.). Oxford, 1962.
- P. Col.* *Columbia Papyri VII: Fourth Century Documents from Karanis.* R. S. Bagnall and N. Lewis (ed. and trans.). Missoula, 1979.

- P. Flor.* *Papiri greco-egizii*. G. Vitelli and D. Comparetti (eds.). Milan, 1906-15.
- P. Gen.* *Les Papyrus de Genève*. J. Nicole. Ville de Genève, 1896-1900.
- P. Lips* *Griechische Urkunden der Papyrussammlung zu Leipzig*. L. Mitteis (ed.). Leipzig, 1906.
- P. Oxy.* *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*. B. P. Grenfell et al. (eds.) London, 1898-.
- Pan. Lat.* *In Praise of Later Roman Emperors: the Panegyrici Latini*. C. E. V. Nixon and B. S. Rodgers (ed. and trans.). Berkeley, 1994.
- Pasch. Camp.* *Paschale Campanum*, in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica: AA IX*: 305-334. T. Mommsen (ed.). Berlin, 1892.
- Paul. V. Amb.* Paulinus of Milan. *Vita di S. Ambrogio*. M. Pellegrino (ed.), *Verba Seniorum*, ns 1. Rome, 1961; cf. *Vita Sancti Ambrosii Mediolanensis Episcopi, a Paulino Eius Notario ad Beatum Augustinum Conscripta*. M. S. Kaniecka (trans.). Washington, DC, 1928.
- Petr. Patr.* Peter the Patrician. *The Lost History of Peter the Patrician: an Account of Rome's Imperial Past from the Age of Justinian*. T. M. Banchich (ed. and trans.). London and New York: 2015.
- Philost. HE.* Philostorgius. *Historia ecclesiastica: Kirchengeschichte*. J. Bidez and F. Winkelmann (eds.). Berlin, 1972; cf. *Philostorgios: Kirchengeschichte*. B. Bleckmann and M Stein (eds. and trans.), 2 vols. Paderborn, 2015.
- Polyb.* Polybius. *The Histories*. W. R. Paton (ed. and trans.), F. W. Walbank and C. Habicht (rev.), 6 vols. Cambridge, Mass., 2010-12.
- Procop. BP* Procopius. *History of the Wars: The Persian War*, vol. 1. H. B. Dewing (ed. and trans.), 7 vols. Cambridge, Mass., 1914.
- Procop. DV* Procopius. *History of the Wars: The Vandalic War*, vol. 2. H. B. Dewing (ed. and trans.), 7 vols. Cambridge, Mass., 1916.
- Prosp. Tiro.* Prosper Tironis. *Epitoma Chronicon*, in *Chronica Minora 1: Monumenta Germaniae Historica: AA IX*: 341-499. T. Mommsen (ed.), 3 vols. Berlin, 1892).
- Prud. C. Symm.* Prudentius. *Contra Symmachum*, in *Prudentius*, vol. 1: 344-401 and 2: 2-97. H. J. Thomson (ed. and trans.), 2 vols. Cambridge, Mass., 1961.
- Ruf. HE.* Rufinus. *Historia ecclesiastica*, in *Eusebii historia ecclesiastica translate et continuata*: 947-1040. T. Mommsen (ed.). Berlin, 1908; cf. *The Church History of Rufinus of Aquileia: Books 10 and 11*. P. Amidon (trans.). Oxford, 1997.

- Sid. Ap. *Carm.* Sidonius Apollinaris. *Poems and Letters*, vol. 1: 1-327. W. B. Anderson (ed. and trans.), 2 vols. Cambridge, Mass., 1963.
- Sid. Ap. *Ep.* Sidonius Apollinaris. *Poems and Letters*, vols. 1: 331-483, 2. W. B. Anderson (ed. and trans.), 2 vols. Cambridge, Mass., 1963.
- Soc. Socrates. *Historia ecclesiastica: Kirchengeschichte*. G. C. Hansen (ed.). Turnhout, 1995.
- Soz. Sozomen. *Historia ecclesiastica: Kirchengeschichte* (2nd edn.). J. Bidez and G. C. Hansen (eds.). Turnhout, 1995.
- Symm. *Or.* Symmachus. *Q. Aurelii Symmachi quae supersunt: Monumenta Germaniae Historica: AA 6.1: 318-39*. O. Seeck (ed.). 1883.
- Symm. *Rel.* Symmachus. *Q. Aurelii Symmachi quae supersunt: Monumenta Germaniae Historica: AA 6.1: 279-317*. O. Seeck (ed.). 1883.
- Syn. *de reg.* Synesius. *Opere di Sinesio di Cirene: Epistole, operette, inni*. A. Garzya (ed. and trans.). Turin, 1989.
- Tabari Tabari. *The History of al-Tabari, vol. 5: The Sasanids, the Byzantines, the Lakmids and Yemen*. C. E. Bosworth (trans.). Albany, 1999.
- Them. *Or.* Themistius. *Orationes quae supersunt*. G. Downey and A. F. Norman (eds.), 3 vols. Leipzig, 1965-74; cf. *Politics, Philosophy, and Empire in the Fourth Century: Select Orations of Themistius*. P. Heather and D. Moncur (ed. and trans.). Liverpool, 2001.
- Theod. *HE.* Theodoret. *Historia ecclesiastica: Kirchengeschichte* (3rd edn.). L. Parmentier and G. C. Hansen (ed.). Berlin, 1998.
- Theoph. Theophanes. *Chronographia*. C. DeBoor (ed.). 1882; rep., Hildesheim, 1963; cf. *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor*. C. Mango and R. Scott (trans.). Oxford, 1997.
- Veg. Vegetius Renatus. *Epitoma rei militaris*. C. Lang (ed.). Leipzig, 1885; cf. *Vegetius: Epitome of Military Science*. N. P. Milner (trans.). Liverpool, 1993.
- Vita Isaacii* *Acta sanctorum Maii VII: 246-60*.
- Zon. Zonaras. *Epitomae historiarum libri XVIII*. T. Büttner-Wobst (ed.). Bonn, 1897; cf. *The History of Zonaras: From Alexander Severus to the Death of Theodosius the Great*. T. Banchich and E. Lane (trans.). London, 2011.
- Zos. Zosimus. *Histoire nouvelle*. F. Paschoud (ed. and trans.), 3 vols. Paris, 1971-89; cf. *Zosimus: New History*. R. T. Ridley (trans.). Sydney, 1982.

Secondary

Alföldi, Andreas. 1967. 'Die Hauptfaktoren der Geschichtsentwicklung zwischen 249-270 n. Chr.' in *Studien zur Geschichte der Weltkrise des 3. Jahrhunderts nach Christus*, Andreas Alföldi (ed.). Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.

Alvarez-Jimenez, David. 2013. 'Ammianus and Theodosius I concerning the Barbarica Conspiratio' in *The Theodosian Age (A.D. 379-455): Power, Place, Belief and Learning at the End of the Western Empire*, Rosa Garcia-Gasco, Sergio Gonzalez Sanchez, and David Hernandez de la Fuente (eds.). Oxford: Gordon House.

Amory, Patrick. 1997. *People and identity in Ostrogothic Italy, 489-554*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Arrizabalaga y Prado, Leonardo de. 2010. *The Emperor Elagabalus: Fact or Fiction?* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Avi-Yonah, Michael. 1962. *Geschichte der Juden im Zeitalter des Talmud in den Tagen von Rom und Byzanz*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.

Bagnall, Roger, Alan Cameron, Seth Schwartz, and Klass Worp. 1987. *Consuls of the Later Roman Empire*. Atlanta: Scholars Press.

Balkanska, Anna. 1980. 'Tiris - Tirisa - Akra. Die thrakische und römisch-byzantinische Stadt am Kap Kaliakra (Scythia Minor)' *Klio* 62: 27-46.

Ball, Warwick. 2016. *Rome in the East: The Transformation of an Empire*. New York: Routledge.

Barnes, Timothy. 1975. 'Patricii under Valentinian III' *Phoenix* 29.2: 155-170.

Barnes, Timothy. 1980. 'Imperial Chronology, A. D. 337-350' *Phoenix* 34.2: 160-166.

Barnes, Timothy. 1981. *Constantine and Eusebius*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Barnes, Timothy. 1990. 'Religion and Society in the Age of Theodosius', in *Grace, Politics and Desire: Essays on Augustine*, H. A. Meynell (ed.). Calgary: University of Calgary Press.

Barnes, Timothy. 1993. *Athanasius and Constantius: Theology and Politics in the Constantinian Empire*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Barnes, Timothy. 1995. 'Statistics and the Conversion of the Roman Aristocracy' *The Journal of Roman Studies* 85: 135-147.

Barnes, Timothy. 1996. 'Emperors, Panegyrics, Prefects, Provinces and Palaces (284-317)' *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 9: 532-552.

Barnes, Timothy. 1998. *Ammianus and the Representation of Historical Reality*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Barnes, Timothy. 2010. *Early Christian Hagiography and Roman History*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck.

Barnes, Timothy. 2014. *Constantine: Dynasty, Religion and Power in the Later Roman Empire*. England: Wiley Blackwell.

Bennett, Julian. 2001. *Trajan: Optimus Princeps*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Bidez, Joseph, and Friedhelm Winkelmann (eds.). 1972. *Philostorgius: Kirchengeschichte. Mit dem Leben des Lucian von Antiochien und den Fragmenten eines arianischen Historiographen*. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag.

Bingham, Sandra. 2013. *The Praetorian Guard: A History of Rome's Elite Special Forces*. Waco: Baylor University Press

Bird, H. W. (ed.). 1994. *Aurelius Victor: De Caesaribus*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.

Birley, Anthony Richard. 1981. *The Fasti of Roman Britain*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Birley, Anthony Richard. 1993. *Marcus Aurelius: A Biography*. London: Routledge.

Bjornlie, M. Shane. 2018. 'Romans, barbarians and provincials in the Res Gestae of Ammianus Marcellinus' in *Transformations of Romanness: Early Medieval Regions and Identities*. Walter Pohl, Clemens Gantner, Cinzia Grifoni and Marianne Pollheimer-Mohaupt (eds.). Boston: Walter de Gruyter.

Blanco-Perez, Aitor. 2013. 'Themistius and the Accession of Theodosius I (Oratio XIV)' in *The Theodosian Age (A.D. 379-455): Power, Place, Belief and Learning at the End of the Western Empire*, Rosa Garcia-Gasco, Sergio Gonzalez Sanchez, and David Hernandez de la Fuente (eds.). Oxford: Gordon House.

Bleckmann, Bruno. 1992. *Die Reichskrise des III. Jahrhunderts in der spätantiken und byzantinischen Geschichtsschreibung. Untersuchungen zu den nachdionischen Quellen der Chronik des Johannes Zonaras*. Munich: Tuduv.

Bleckmann, Bruno. 1994. 'Constantina, Vetranio und Gallus Caesar' *Chiron* 24: 29-68

Bleckmann, Bruno. 2003. 'Der Bürgerkrieg zwischen Constantin II. und Constans (340 n. Chr.)' *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* 52.2: 225-250.

Bleckmann, Bruno. 2009. *Die Germanen: Von Ariovist bis zu den Wikingern*. Munich: C.H. Beck Verlag.

Bleckmann, Bruno. 2012. 'Sources for the History of Constantine' in *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Constantine (Revised Edition)*, Noel Lenski (ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bleckmann, Bruno, and Markus Stein (eds.). 2015. *Philostorgios: Kirchengeschichte*. Volume Two. Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh

Bloch, Herbert. 1945. 'A new document of the last pagan revival of the west, 393–394AD' *The Harvard Theological Review* 38.4: 200-244.

Blockley, Roger. 1980. 'The Date of the 'Barbarian Conspiracy'' *Britannia* 11: 223-225.

Blockley, Roger. 1987. 'The Division of Armenia between the Romans and the Persians at the End of the Fourth Century AD' *Historia* 36.2: 222-234.

Blockley, Roger. 1992. *East Roman foreign policy: formation and conduct from Diocletian to Anastasius*. Leeds: Francis Cairns.

Boak, Arthur. 1915. 'The Roman Magistri in the Civil and Military Service of the Empire' *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 26: 73-164.

Boak, Arthur. 1955. *Manpower Shortage and the Fall of the Roman Empire in the West*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.

Boer, W. den. 1960. 'The Emperor Silvanus and his Army' *Acta Classica* 3:105-109.

Borg, B. E. and C. Witschel. 2001. 'Veränderungen im Repräsentationsverhalten der römischen Eliten während des 3. Jhs. n. Chr.' in *Inchriftliche Denkmäler als Medien der Selbstdarstellung in der römischen Welt*, Geza Alföldy and Silvio Panciera (eds.). Stuttgart: Steiner.

Bowman, Alan, Averil Cameron, and Peter Garnsey (eds.). 2005. *The Cambridge Ancient History, Volume 12: The Crisis of Empire, AD 193-337*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bowersock, G. W. 1978. *Julian the Apostate*. London: Duckworth..

- Bowersock, G. W. 1980. 'Mavia, Queen of the Saracens' in *Studien zur antiken Sozialgeschichte: Festschrift Vittinghoff*, Werner Eck, Hartmut Galsterer, and Hartmut Wolff (eds.). Cologne: Böhlau.
- Brennan, P. 1996. 'The Notitia Dignitatum' in *Les littératures techniques dans l'antiquité romaine : statut, public et destination, tradition: sept exposés suivis de discussions*. Genève: Fondation Hardt.
- Brennan, P. 1998. 'The User's Guide to the Notitia Dignitatum: The Case of the Dux Armeniae (ND Or. 38)' *Antichthon* 32: 34-49 .
- Brennan, P. 2007. 'Zosimos 2.34.1 and 'The Constantinian Reform': Using Johannes Lydos to Expose an Insidious Fabrication' in *The Late Roman Army in the Near East from Diocletian to the Arab Conquest*, Ariel Lewin and Pietrina Pellegrini (eds.). Oxford: Archaeopress.
- Brown, Peter. 1971. *The World of Late Antiquity: from Marcus Aurelius to Muhammad*. London: Thames and Hudson.
- Browning, R. 1975. *The Emperor Julian*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson.
- Brunt, P. A. 1971. *Italian Manpower, 225 B.C.-A.D. 14*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Cameron, Alan. 1969. 'Theodosius the Great and the regency of Stilicho' *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 73: 247-280.
- Cameron, Alan. 1970. *Claudian: Poetry and Propaganda at the Court of Honorius*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Cameron, Alan. 2011. *The Last Pagans of Rome*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Camps, Gabriel. 1984. 'Rex gentium Maurorum et Romanorum' *Antiquités Africaines*, 20: 183-218.
- Chadwick, Henry. 1997. 'Orthodoxy and Heresy from the Death of Constantine to the Eve of the First Council Of Ephesus' in *The Cambridge Ancient History, Volume 13: The Late Empire, AD 337-425*, Averil Cameron and Peter Garnsey (eds.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Chalmers, Walter R. 1960. 'Eunapius, Ammianus Marcellinus, and Zosimus on Julian's Persian Expedition' *The Classical Quarterly* 10.2: 152-160.
- Chastagnol, André. 1992. *Le sénat romain à l'époque impériale. Recherches sur la composition de l'Assemblée et le statut de ses membres*. Paris: Les Belles Lettres.

Cheesman, George Leonard. 1914. *The Auxilia of the Roman Imperial Army*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Cichocka, H. 1990. 'Zosimus' Account of Christianity' *Siculorum Gymnasium* 43: 171-183.

Cichorius, Conrad. 1986. *Die Reliefs der Traianssäule. Erster Tafelband: "Die Reliefs des Ersten Dakischen Krieges", Tafeln 1-57*, Berlin: Verlag von Georg Reimer.

Clarke, Graeme. 2005. 'Christianity in the First Three Centuries' in *The Cambridge Ancient History, Volume 12: The Crisis of Empire, AD 193-337*. Alan Bowman, Averil Cameron, and Peter Garnsey (eds.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Coello, Terence. 1996. *Unit Sizes in the Late Roman Army*. Oxford: Tempvs Reparatum.

Corcoran, Simon. 2000. *The Empire of the Tetrarchs: Imperial Pronouncements and Government, AD 284-324*, Second Edition. New York: Clarendon Press.

Corcoran, Simon. 2008. 'Diocletian' in *Lives of the Caesars*, Anthony Barrett (ed.). Oxford: Blackwell.

Corcoran, Simon. 2012. 'Before Constantine' in *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Constantine (Revised Edition)*, Noel Lenski (ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Corcoran, Simon. 2014. 'State Correspondence in the Roman Empire: Imperial Communication from Augustus to Justinian', in *State Correspondence in the Ancient World: From New Kingdom Egypt to the Roman Empire*, Radner, Karen (ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cosme, Pierre. 2007. 'À propos de l'édit de Gallien', in *Crises and the Roman Empire: Proceedings of the Seventh Workshop of the International Network Impact of Empire, Nijmegen, June 20-24, 2006*, Olivier Hekster, Gerda de Kleijn, and Danielle Slootjes (eds.). Boston: Brill.

Croke, Brian. 1976. 'Arbogast and the Death of Valentinian II' *Historia: Zeitschrift Für Alte Geschichte* 25.2: 235-244.

Croke, Brian. 2005. 'Dynasty and Ethnicity: Emperor Leo I and the Eclipse of Aspar.' *Chiron* 35: 147-203.

Dal Santo, Gitte Lonstrop. 2015. 'Concordia Apostolorum – Concordia Augustorum. Building a Corporate Image for the Theodosian Dynasty', in *East and West in the Roman Empire of the Fourth Century: An End to Unity?*, Roald Dijkstra, Sanne van Poppel, and Danielle Slootjes (eds.) Boston: Brill.

Davenport, Cailan. 2019. *A History of the Roman Equestrian Order*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

De Blois, Lukas. 1958. *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus*. Leiden: Brill.

Dearn, Alan. 2003. 'The Coinage of Vetrano: Imperial Representation and the Memory of Constantine the Great' *The Numismatic Chronicle* 163: 169-191.

Deferrari, Roy (ed.). 1952. *Early Christian Biographies*. Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press.

Demandt, Alexander. 1969. 'Der Tod Des Alteren Theodosius' *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* 18.5: 598-626.

Demandt, Alexander. 1970. 'Magister Militum' *Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft* Suppl. 12: 553-790.

Demandt, Alexander. 1972. 'Die Feldzüge der älteren Theodosius' *Hermes* 100: 81-113.

Demandt, Alexander. 1989. 'The Osmosis of Late Roman and Germanic Aristocracies' in *Das Reich und die Barbaren*, Evangelos K. Chrysos, Andreas Schawrcz (eds.). Vienna: Bohlau Verlag.

Devijver, Hubert. 1999. 'Les relations sociales des chevaliers romains', in *L'ordre équestre: histoire d'une aristocratie (Ile siècle av. J.-C.-IIIe siècle ap. J.-C.)*, Ségolène Demougin, Hubert Devijver, et Marie-Thérèse Raepsaet-Charlier (eds.), Rome: Ecole française de Rome.

Dixon, Karen R., and Pat Southern. 1992. *The Roman Cavalry: from the First to the Third Century AD*. London: Batsford.

Dixon, Karen R., and Pat Southern. 1996. *The Late Roman Army*. New York: Routledge.

Dobson, Brian. 1974. 'The Significance of the Centurion and Primipilaris in the Roman Army and Administration', in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* 2.1: 392-434.

Dobson, Brian. 1978. *Die Primipilares: Entwicklung und Bedeutung, Laufbahnen und Persönlichkeiten eines römischen Offiziersranges*, Bonn: Rheinland-Verlag.

Drake, Harold. 2005. 'The Impact of Constantine on Christianity' in *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Constantine*, Noel Lenski (ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Drake, Harold. 2009. 'Solar Power in Late Antiquity' in *The Power of Religion in Late Antiquity*, Andrew Cain and Noel Lenski (eds.). Farnham: Ashgate.

Drinkwater, John. 1983. 'The Pagan Underground, Constantius II's "Secret Service", and the Survival, and the Usurpation of Julian the Apostate', in *Studies in Latin Literature and Roman History III (Collection Latomus 180)*, Carl Deroux (ed.). Brussels: Latomus.

Drinkwater, John. 1994. 'Silvanus, Ursicinus and Ammianus: fact or fiction?', in *Studies in Latin Literature and Roman History VII (Collection Latomus 227)*, Carl Deroux (ed.). Brussels: Latomus.

Drinkwater, John. 2000. 'The Revolt and Ethnic Origin of the Usurper Magnentius (350–53), and the Rebellion of Vetricio (350)' *Chiron* 30: 131-45.

Drinkwater, John. 2007. *The Alamanni and Rome 213-496: Caracalla to Clovis*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Drogula, Fred. 2015. *Commanders and Command in the Roman Republic and Early Empire*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.

Duncan, Mike. 2017. *The Storm Before the Storm: The Beginning of the End of the Roman Republic*, First Edition. New York: Public Affairs.

Elton, Hugh. 1996. *Warfare in Roman Europe, AD 350-425*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Enßlin, Wilhelm. 1930. 'Zum heermeisteramt des spätrömischen reiches: Die titulatur der magistri militum bis auf theodosius I' *Klio* 23: 306-325.

Enßlin, Wilhelm. 1931a. 'Zum heermeisteramt des spätrömischen reiches: Die magistri militum des 4. Jahrhunderts' *Klio* 24: 102-147.

Enßlin, Wilhelm. 1931b. 'Zum heermeisteramt des spätrömischen reiches: Der magister utriusque militiae et patricius des 5. Jahrhunderts' *Klio* 24: 467-502.

Eriksen, Thomas. 1993. *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives*. London: Pluto Press.

Errington, Malcolm. 1996a. 'The accession of Theodosius I' *Klio* 78.2: 438–53.

Errington, Malcolm. 1996b. 'Theodosius and the Goths' *Chiron* 26: 1-27.

Errington, Malcolm. 2006. *Roman Imperial Policy from Julian to Theodosius*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Faber, Eike. 2013. 'The *foedus* of 382 or how the Goths did not become Integrated into the Roman Empire' in *The Theodosian Age (A.D. 379-455): Power, Place, Belief and Learning at the*

End of the Western Empire, Rosa Garcia-Gasco, Sergio Gonzalez Sanchez, and David Hernandez de la Fuente (eds.). Oxford: Gordon House.

Fanning, Steven. 2011. 'Reguli in the Roman Empire, Late Antiquity, and the Early Medieval Germanic Kingdoms' in *Romans, Barbarians, and the Transformation of the Roman World: Cultural Interaction and the Creation of Identity in Late Antiquity*, Ralph Mathisen and Danuta Shanzer (eds.). Burlington: Ashgate.

Ferrill, Arther. 1986. *The Fall of The Roman Empire: The Military Explanation*. London: Thames and Hudon.

Finley, M. 1958. 'Review: Manpower Shortage and the Fall of the Roman Empire in the West by Arthur E. R. Boak' *The Journal of Roman Studies* 48.1/2: 156-164.

Frere, Sheppard. 1987. *Britannia: A History of Roman Britain*, Third Edition. London and New York: Routledge and Kegal Paul.

Gardner, William Bell. 2005. *Commanding Generals and Chiefs of Staff 1775-2005: Portraits & Biographical Sketches of the United States Army's Senior Officer*. Washington, D.C.: United States Army Center of Military History.

Garsoian, Nina, 1999. *L'Église arménienne et le grand schisme d'Orient*. Lovanii: In Aedibus Peeters.

Geary, Patrick. 1988. *Before France and Germany: The Creation and Transformation of the Merovingian World*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Geatrex, Geoffrey, and Stephen Mitchell (eds.). 2000. *Ethnicity and Culture in Late Antiquity*. London: Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd.

Geiger, Joseph. 1979. 'Ammianus Marcellinus and the Jewish Revolt under Gallus: A Note' *Liverpool Classical Monthly* 4.4: 77.

Geiger, Joseph. 1979-80. 'The Last Jewish Revolt against Rome: A Reconsideration' *Scripta Classica Israelica* 5: 250-257.

Gibbon, Edward. 1781. *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Third Volume, originally published 1781, David Womersley (ed.). England: The Penguin Press, 1994.

Gilliver, Kate. 2007. 'The Augustan Reform and the Structure of the Imperial Army' in *A Companion to the Roman Army*, Paul Erdkamp (ed.). Oxford: Blackwell.

- Goldsworthy, Adrian. 2003. *The Complete Roman Army*. New York: Thames Hudson.
- Goldsworthy, Adrian. 2009. *How Rome Fell: Death of a Superpower*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Grosse, Robert. 1920. *Römische Militärgeschichte von Gallienus bis zum Beginn der Byzantinischen Themenverfassung*. Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung.
- Gutmann, Bernhard. 1991. *Studien zur römischen Aussenpolitik in der Spätantike: 364-395 n. Chr.*. Bonn: Rudolph Habelt.
- Haeling, Raban von. 1978. *Die Religionszugehörigkeit der hohen Amtsträger des Römischen Reiches Seit Constantins I. Alleinherrschaft bis zum Ende der Theodosianischen Dynastie (324-450 BZW. 455 N. CHR.) (Antiquitas, Reihe III, XXIII)*. Bonn: Rudolf Habelt.
- Halsall, Guy. 2007. *Barbarian Migrations and the Roman West, 376-568*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Halsall, Guy. 2018. 'Transformations of Romanness: The northern Gallic case' in *Transformations of Romanness: Early Medieval Regions and Identities*. Walter Pohl, Clemens Gantner, Cinzia Grifoni and Marianne Pollheimer-Mohaupt (eds.). Boston: Walter de Gruyter.
- Harmand, Jacques. 1967. *L'armée et le Soldat a Rome de 107 a 50 avant notre ere*. Paris: Editions A. et J. Picard et Cie.
- Harries, Jill. 2012. *Imperial Rome AD 284 to 363: The New Empire*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Heather, Peter, and David Moncur. 2002. *Politics, Philosophy, and Empire in the Fourth Century: Select Orations of Themistius*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.
- Heather, Peter. 1991. *Goths and Romans 332-489*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Heather, Peter. 1998. 'Senatorial Careers' in *The Cambridge Ancient History, Volume 13: The Late Empire, AD 337-425*, Averil Cameron and Peter Garnsey (eds.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Heather, Peter. 1999. *The Visigoths from the Migration Period to the Seventh Century: an Ethnographic Perspective*. Rochester: Boydell Press.
- Heather, Peter. 2005. *The Fall of the Roman Empire*. London: Macmillan.

Hebblewhite, Mark. 2017. *The Emperor and the Army in the Later Roman Empire: AD 235-395*. New York: Routledge.

Heering, Walter. 1927. *Kaiser Valentinian I. (364-375 n. Chr.)*. Ph.D dissertation, University of Jena.

Heil, Wilhelm. 1966. *Der konstantinische Patriziat*. Basel: Helbing & Lichtenhahn.

Hoepffner, André. 1936. 'Les "Magistri Militum Praesentales" Au IV e Siècle' *Byzantion* 11.2: 483-498.

Hoffman, Dietrich. 1974. 'Der Oberbefehl des Spätromischen Heeres im 4. Jahrhundert n. Chr.' in *Actes Du IXeCongres International D'Etudes sur lesFrontieres Romaines: Mamaia, 6-13 Septembre 1972*, Dionisie Pippidi (ed.). Cologne: Bohlau Verlag.

Hoffmann, Dietrich. 1969-70. *Das spätrömische Bewegungsheer und die Notitia Dignitatum*. Two Volumes. Dusseldorf: Rheinland-Verlag.

Honoré, Tony. 1998. *Law in the Crisis of Empire 379-455 AD: The Theodosian Dynasty and its Quaestors*. Clarendon: Oxford University Press.

Howe, Laurence. 1942. *The Pretorian Prefect from Commodus to Diocletian (AD 180– 305)*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Hoyos, Dexter. 2007. 'The Age of Overseas Expansion (264-146 BCE)' in *A Companion to the Roman Army*, Paul Erdkamp (ed.). Oxford: Blackwell.

Hughes, Ian. 2010. *Stilicho: The Vandal Who Saved Rome*. South Yorkshire: Pen & Sword Books Ltd.

Hunt, David. 1997a. 'Julian' in *The Cambridge Ancient History, Volume 13: The Late Empire, AD 337–425*, Averil Cameron and Peter Garnsey (eds.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hunt, David. 1997b. 'The Successors of Constantine' in *The Cambridge Ancient History, Volume 13: The Late Empire, AD 337–425*, Averil Cameron and Peter Garnsey (eds.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Jacobs, Louis. 2008. *Structure and Form in the Babylonian Talmud*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Jans, N. A., and J. M. Frazer-Jans. 2001. 'Job Rotation and Military Capability: Benefits, Certainly – but is Anyone Counting the Cost?' *Australian Defence Force Journal* 146: 47-59.

- Jones, Arnold H. M. 1964. *The Later Roman Empire, 284-602: A Social, Economic and Administrative Survey*. Oxford: Blackwell
- Jones, Arnold H. M., John R. Martindale, John Morris. 1971. *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire: A.D. 260-395*. Two Volumes. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kaldellis, Anthony. 2007. *Hellenism in Byzantium: The Transformations of Greek Identity and the Reception of the Classical Tradition*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Kelly, Christopher. 2006. 'Bureaucracy and Government', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Constantine*, Noel Lenski (ed.). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Keyes, Clinton. 1915. *The Rise of the Equites in the Third Century*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Krawczyk, Małgorzata. 2016. 'Flawiusz Hermogenes – magister equitum Konstancjusza II czy praeses provinciae Scythiae?' *U schyłku starożytności - Studia źródłoznawcze* 15: 31-40.
- Kulikowski, Michael. 2000. 'The Notitia Dignitatum as a Historical Source' *Historia* 49: 358-377.
- Kulikowski, Michael. 2002. 'Nation versus Army: A Necessary Contrast?' in *On Barbarian Identity: Critical Approaches to Ethnicity in the Early Middle Ages*, Andrew Gillet (ed.). Belgium: Brepolis.
- Kulikowski, Michael. 2007. *Rome's Gothic Wars: From the Third Century to Alaric*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Ladner, Gerhart. 1976. 'On Roman Attitudes Towards Barbarians in Late Antiquity' *Viator* 7: 1-26.
- Landelle, Marc. 2016. 'À Propos de la Création des Magistri Militum par Constantin I^{er}' *Revue des Etudes Anciennes* 118.2: 493-509.
- Le Bohec, Yann. 2004. 'Gallien et l'encadrement senatorial de l'armée romaine' *Revue des Etudes Militaires Anciennes* 1: 123-32.
- Lee, A. D. 2008. 'The Army' in *The Cambridge Ancient History, Volume 13: The Late Empire, AD 337-425*, Averil Cameron and Peter Garnsey (eds.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lee, Doug. 2015. 'Emperors and Generals in the Fourth Century' in *Contested Monarchy: Integrating the Roman Empire in the Fourth Century AD*, Johannes Wienand (ed.). New York: Oxford University Press, 2015.

Lenski, Noel. 1999. 'Assimilation and Revolt in the Territory of Isauria, from the 1st Century BC to the 6th Century AD' *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 42.4: 413-465.

Lenski, Noel. 2000. 'The Election of Jovian and the Role of the Late Imperial Guards' *Klio* 82.2: 492-515.

Lenski, Noel. 2002. 'Were Valentinian, Valens and Jovian Confessors before Julian the Apostate?' *Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum* 6: 94-117.

Lenski, Noel. 2004. 'Valens and the Monks: Cudgeling and Conscription as a Means of Social Control' *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 58: 93-117.

Lenski, Noel. 2007. 'The Chronology of Valens' Dealings with Persia and Armenia, 364-378 CE' in *Ammianus After Julian: The Reign of Valentinian and Valens in Books 26-31 of the Res Gestae*, Jan den Boeft, Jan Willem Drijvers, and Hans Carel Teitler (eds.). Boston: Brill.

Lenski, Noel. 2008. 'Constantine' in *Lives of the Caesars*, Anthony Barrett (ed.). Oxford: Blackwell.

Lenski, Noel. 2017. 'The Significance of the Edict of Milan' in *Constantine: Religious Faith and Imperial Policy*, A. Edward Sicienski (ed.), Routledge: London and New York.

Leppin, Hartmut. 1996. *Von Constantin dem Großen zu Theodosius II: Das christliche Kaisertum bei den Kirchenhistorikern Socrates, Sozomenus und Theodoret*. Gottingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.

Lieberman, Saul. 1946. 'Palestine in the Third and Fourth Centuries' *Jewish Quarterly Review* 35: 329-370.

Liebeschuetz, J. H. W. G. 1972. *Antioch: City and Imperial Administration in the Later Roman Empire*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Liebeschuetz, J. H. W. G. 1990. *Barbarians and Bishops: Army, Church, and State in the Age of Arcadius and Chrysostom*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Liebeschuetz, J. H. W. G. 1993. 'The End of the Roman Army in the Western Empire' in *War and Society in the Roman World*, John Rich and Graham Shipley (eds.). New York.

Liebeschuetz, J. H. W. G. 1998. 'Citizen Status and Law in the Roman Empire and the Visigothic Kingdom' *Strategies of Distinction: The Construction of Ethnic Communities, 300-800*, Walter Pohl and Helmut Reimitz (eds.). Leiden: Brill.

Liebeschuetz, J. H. W. G. 2007. 'Was there a Crisis of the Third Century?' in *Crises and the Roman Empire: proceedings of the Seventh Workshop of the international network Impact of Empire, Nijmegen, June 20-24, 2006*. Olivier Hekster, Gerda de Kleijn, Daniëlle Sloopjes (eds.). Boston: Brill.

Lunn-Rockliffe, Sophie. 2010. 'Commemorating the Esurper Magnus Maximus: Ekphrasis, Poetry and History in Pacatus' Panegyric of Theodosius' *Journal of Late Antiquity* 3.2: 316-336.

Luttwak, Edward. 2016. *The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire: From the First Century CE to the Third*, Revised and Updated Edition. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.

MacMullen, Ramsay. 1963. 'Barbarian Enclaves in the Northern Roman Empire' *L'Antiquité Classique* 32.2: 552-561.

Mann, J. C. 1991. 'The Notitia Dignitatum: Dating and Survival' *Britannia* 22: 215-219.

Martin, Bradley. 2004. *Under the Loving Care of the Fatherly Leader: A History of North Korea and the Kim Dynasty*. New York: Thomas Dunne.

Masland, John and Laurence Radway. 1957. *Soldiers and Scholars: Military Education and National Policy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Mathisen, Ralph. 1997. 'Les Barbares intellectuels dans l'Antiquité tardive' *Dialogues d'histoire ancienne Année* 23.2: 139-148.

Mathisen, Ralph. 2006. 'Peregrini, Barbari, and Cives Romani: Concepts of Citizenship and the Legal Identity of Barbarians in the Later Roman Empire' *The American Historical Review* 111.4: 1011-1040.

Mathisen, Ralph. 2018. "Roman' Identity in Late Antiquity, with special attention to Gaul' in *Transformations of Romanness: Early Medieval Regions and Identities*. Walter Pohl, Clemens Gantner, Cinzia Grifoni and Marianne Pollheimer-Mohaupt (eds.). Boston: Walter de Gruyter.

Mathisen, Ralph. 2019. 'The End of the Western Roman Empire in the Fifth Century CE: Barbarian Auxiliaries, Independent Military Contractors, and Civil Wars' in *The Fifth Century: Age of Transformation: Proceedings of the 12th Biennial Shifting Frontiers in Late Antiquity Conference*, Jan Willem Drijvers and Noel Lenski (eds.). Bari: Edipuglia.

Matthews, John. 1971, 'Gallic Supporters of Theodosius' *Latomus* 30: 1073-99.

Matthews, John. 1975. *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court, AD 364-425*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

- Matthews, John. 1989. *The Roman Empire of Ammianus*. London: Duckworth.
- Mayerson, Philip. 1980. 'Mavia, Queen of the Saracens - A Cautionary Note' *Israel Exploration Journal* 30.1/2: 123-131.
- McCall, Jeremiah. 2002. *The Cavalry of the Roman Republic. Cavalry Combat and Elite Reputations in the Middle and Late Republic*. London: Routledge.
- McEvoy, Meaghan. 2013. *Child Emperor Rule in the Late Roman West, AD 367-455*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Mclynn, Neil. 1994. *Ambrose of Milan: Church and Court in a Christian Capital*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Mendelsohn, Ludwig (ed.). 1887. Zosimus: *Historia Nova*. Leipzig.
- Mitchell, Stephen and Geoffrey Greatrex (eds). 2000. *Ethnicity and Culture in Late Antiquity*. London: Duckworth.
- Mommsen, Theodor. 1889. 'Das Römische Militärwesen Seit Diocletian' *Hermes* 24.2: 195-279.
- Mommsen, Theodor. 1901. 'Aetius' *Hermes* 36.4: 516-547.
- Mor, Menachem. 1989. 'The Events of 351-352 in Palestine - The Last Revolt against Rome?' in *The Eastern Frontier of the Roman Empire. Proceedings of a Colloquium Held at Ankara in September 1988*, David French and Chris Lightfoot (eds.). Oxford: B.A.R.
- Näf, Beat. 1995. *Senatorisches Standesbewusstsein in spätrömischer Zeit*. Freiburg: Universitätsverlag.
- Nathanson, Barbara Geller. 1986. 'Jews, Christians, and the Gallus Revolt in Fourth-Century Palestine' *The Biblical Archaeologist* 49.1: 26-36.
- Nesselhauf, Herbert. 1938. *Die spätrömische Verwaltung der gallisch-germanischen Länder*. Berlin: Akademie der Wissenschaften.
- Nicasie, Martinus. 1998. *Twilight of Empire: The Roman Army from the Reign of Diocletian until the Battle of Adrianople*. Amsterdam: J. C. Gieben.
- Nischer, E. v. 1928. 'Das Römische Heer Und Seine Generale Nach Ammianus Marcellinus' *Hermes* 63.1: 430-456.

- Nixon, C. E. V., and Barbara Rodgers. 1994. *In Praise of Later Roman Emperors: the Panegyrici Latini*. Berkeley: University of California.
- Noble, Thomas. 2006. 'Romans, Barbarians, and the Transformation of the Roman Empire' in *From Roman Provinces to Medieval Kingdoms: Rewriting Histories*, Thomas Noble (ed.). London: Routledge.
- Norman, Albert (trans.). 1969–77. *Libanius: Selected Works*. Two Volumes. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Norman, Albert (trans.). 1992. *Libanius: Autobiography and Selected Letters*. Two Volumes. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- O'Flynn, John. 1983. *Generalissimos of the western Roman Empire*. Edmonton: University of Alberta Press.
- Pabst, Angela (trans. and comm.). 1989. *Quintus Aurelius Symmachus Reden*. Darmstadt: WBG Academic.
- Pallottino, Massimo. 2014. *A History of Earliest Italy*. Martin Ryle and Kate Soper (trans.). Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Parnell, David. 2012. 'The Careers of Justinian's Generals' *Journal of Medieval Military History* 10: 1-16.
- Parnell, David. 2017. *Justinian's Men: Careers and Relationships of Byzantine Army Officers, 518-610*. London: Macmillan.
- Patterson, John. 1993. 'Military Organization and Social Change in the Later Roman Republic' in *War and Society in the Roman World*, John Rich and Graham Shipley (eds.). Routledge: London and New York.
- Petit, Paul. 1955. *Libanius et la vie municipale à Antioche au ive siècle*. Paris: Geuthner.
- Petit, Paul. 1974. *La Crise de l'Empire: des derniers Antonins à Diocletien (Histoire generale de l'Empire romain)*. Paris: Editions du Seuil.
- Pohl, Walter. 1998. 'Introduction: Strategies of distinction' in *Strategies of Distinction: The Construction of Ethnic Communities, 300-800*, Walter Pohl and Helmut Reimitz (eds.). Leiden: Brill.

Pohl, Walter. 2014. 'Migrations, Ethnic Groups, and State Building' in *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Attila*, Michael Maas (ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Pohl, Walter. 2018. 'Introduction: Early Medieval Romanness – a multiple identity' in *Transformations of Romanness: Early Medieval Regions and Identities*. Walter Pohl, Clemens Gantner, Cinzia Grifoni and Marianne Pollheimer-Mohaupt (eds.). Boston: Walter de Gruyter.

Potter, David. 2004. *The Roman Empire at Bay AD 180-395*. London: Routledge.

Potter, David. 2015. 'Measuring the Power of the Roman Empire' in *East and West in the Roman Empire of the Fourth Century: An End to Unity?*, Roald Dijkstra, Sanne van Poppel, and Danielle Slootjes (eds.). Brill: Leiden.

Rapisarda, Lo Menzo. 1972. 'La personalita di Ambrogio nell'epistola LVII 1972' *Orpheus* 19: 3-47.

Rawlings, Louis. 2007. 'Army and Battle during the Conquest of Italy (350-264 BCE)' in *A Companion to the Roman Army*, Paul Erdkamp (ed.). Oxford: Blackwell.

Rich, John. 2007. 'Warfare and the Army in Early Rome' in *A Companion to the Roman Army*, Paul Erdkamp (ed.). Oxford: Blackwell.

Ridley, Ronald (trans.). 2006. *Zosimus: New History*. Canberra: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies.

Ridley, Ronald. 1970. 'The Fourth and Fifth Century Civil and Military Hierarchy in Zosimus' *Byzantion* 40: 91-104.

Ridley, Ronald. 1972. 'Zosimus the Historian' *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 65.2: 277-302.

Ridley, Ronald. 1973. 'Notes on Julian's Persian Expedition (363)' *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* 22.2: 317-330.

Rodgers, Barbara. 1981. 'Merobaudes and Maximus in Gaul' *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* 30: 82-105.

Rolfe, John C. 1939. *Ammianus Marcellinus: Volume Three*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Rosen, Klaus. 1970. *Studien zur Darstellungskunst und Glaubwürdigkeit des Ammianus Marcellinus*. Bonn: Rudolf Habelt.

Ruggini, Lellia Cracco. 1979. *Il paganesimo romano tra religione e politica (384-394 d. C.)*. Rome: Accademia nazionale dei Lincei.

Russell, Donald A. and Nigel G. Wilson (eds. and trans.). 1981. *Menander Rhetor*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Salway, Benet. 2008. 'Roman consuls, Imperial Politics, and Egyptian Papyri: The Consulates of 325 and 344 CE' *Journal of Late Antiquity* 1.2: 278-310.

Salzman, Michele Renee. 2006. 'Symmachus and the "Barbarian" Generals' *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* 55.3: 352-367.

Saxer, Robert. 1967. *Untersuchungen zu den Vexillationen des römischen Kaiserheeres von Augustus bis Diokletian*. Cologne: Bohlau.

Schäfer, Peter. 1986. 'Der Aufstand gegen Gallus Caesar' in *Tradition and Reinterpretation in Jewish and Early Christian Literature: Essays in Honour of Jürgen C.H. Lebram*, J. W. van Henten, H. J. de Jonge, P. T. van Rooden, and J. W. Wesselijs (eds.). Leiden: Brill.

Scharf, Ralf. 2005. *Die Dux Mogontiacensis und die Notitia Dignitatum: Eine Studie zur Spätantiken Grenzverteidigung*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.

Schiffman, Lawrence. 1991. *From Text to Tradition: A History of Second Temple and Rabbinic Judaism*. Hoboken: KTAV Publishing House, Inc.

Schmidt-Hofner, Sebastian. 2008. *Reagieren und Gestalten: der Regierungsstil des spätrömischen Kaisers am Beispiel der Gesetzgebung Valentinians I*. Munich: C. H. Beck.

Schönfeld, Moritz. 1911. *Wörterbuch der altgermanischen personen-und völkernamen nach der überlieferung des klassischen altertums bearbeitet*. Heidelberg: Carl Winter's Universitätsbuchhandlung.

Seeck, Otto. 1894. 'Zur Echtheitsfrage des Scriptoris historiae Augustae' *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie* 49: 208-224.

Seeck, Otto. 1906a. 'Zur Chronologie und Quellenkritik des Ammianus Marcellinus' *Hermes* 41.4: 481-539.

Seeck, Otto. 1906b. *Die Briefe des Libanius zeitlich geordnet*. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrich'sche Buchhandlung.

Seeck, Otto. 1919. *Regesten Der Kaiser und Päpste für die Jahre 311 bis 476 N. Chr.: Vorarbeit zu einer Prosopographie der Christlichen Kaiserzeit*. Stuttgart: J. B. Metzlersche.

Seeck, Otto. 1922. *Geschichte des Untergangs der antiken Welt*, Fourth Volume. Stuttgart: J. B. Metzlersche.

Shahid, Irfan. 1984. *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Fourth Century*. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection.

Sivan, Hagith. 1993. *Ausonius of Bordeaux: Genesis of a Gallic Aristocracy*. London: Routledge.

Sivan, Hagith. 1996. 'Was Theodosius I a Usurper?' *Klio* 78: 198-211.

Smith, William. 1875. *A Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities*. London: John Murray.

Speidel, Michael. 1978. *Guards of the Roman Armies: An Essay on the Singulares of the Provinces*. Bonn: Rudolph Habelt.

Speidel, Michael. 1986. 'The Early Protectores and Their Beneficiarius Lance' *Archäologisches Korrespondenzblatt* 16: 451-4.

Speidel, Michael. 1994. *Riding for Caesar: The Roman Emperors' Horse Guard*. London: B T Batsford.

Stein, Ernst. 1928. *Geschichte des spätrömischen Reiches*. Vienna: L. W. Seidel.

Stein, Ernst. 1959. *Histoire du Bas-Empire*. Brussels: Desclée de Brouwer.

Stickler, Timo. 2007. 'The Foederati' in *A Companion to the Roman Army*, Paul Erdkamp (ed.). Oxford: Blackwell.

Stickler, Timo. 2011. 'Die spätrömischen Heermeister bei Philostorg' in *Philostorge et l'historiographie de l'Antiquité tardive / Philostorg im Kontext der spätantiken Geschichtsschreibung*, Doris Meyer (ed.). Stuttgart: Franz Steiner.

Stoll, Oliver. 2007. 'The Religions of the Armies' in *A Companion to the Roman Army*, Paul Erdkamp (ed.). Oxford: Blackwell.

Strobel, Karl. 2007. 'Strategy and Army Structure between Septimius Severus and Constantine the Great' in *A Companion to the Roman Army*, Paul Erdkamp (ed.). Oxford: Blackwell.

Stroheker, K. F. 1961. 'Alamannen im römischen Reichsdienst' in *Eranion; Festschrift für Hildebrecht Hommel, Dargebracht von seinen Tübinger Freunden und Kollegen*, Jürgen Kroymann (ed.). Tübingen: M. Niemeyer.

Syme, Ronald. 1958. *Tacitus*, Two Volumes. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

- Szidat, Joachim. 1979. 'Die Usurpation Des Eugenius' *Historia: Zeitschrift Für Alte Geschichte* 28.4: 487-508.
- Szidat, Joachim. 1981. 'Zur Wirkung und Aufnahme der Munzpropaganda (Iul. Misop. 355 d)' *Museum Helveticum* 38: 22-33.
- Szidat, Joachim. 1992. Ammian und die historische Realität' in *Cognitio Gestorum: The Historiographic Art of Ammianus Marcellinus*. J. den Boeft, D. den Hengst, and H. C. Teitler (eds.). Amsterdam: Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences.
- Talbert, Richard. 1984. *Barrington Atlas of the Greek and Roman World*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Talbert, Richard. 1996. 'The Senate and Senatorial and Equestrian Posts' in *Cambridge Ancient History, Volume 10*, Alan Bowman, Edward Champlin, and Andrew Lintott (eds.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Teall, John L. 1965. 'The barbarians in Justinian's armies' *Speculum* 40.2: 294-322.
- Teitler, Hans. C. 1989. 'Hariomundus en Haldagates: Enkele opmerkingen over barbaren in Romeinse krijgsdienst' *Lampas* 22: 49-58.
- Testa, Rita Lizzi. 2007. 'Christian Emperor, Vestal Virgins and Priestly Colleges: Reconsidering the End of Roman Paganism' *Antiquité Tardive* 15: 251-162.
- Thelamon, Françoise. 1981. *Païens et chrétiens au IVe siècle: l'apport de l'"Histoire ecclésiastique" de Rufin d'Aquilée*. Paris: Études augustiniennes.
- Thompson, E. A. 1947. *The Historical Work of Ammianus Marcellinus*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Thomson, R. W. (ed. and trans.). 1978. Moses Khorenats'I: *Moses of Chorene, History of the Armenians*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Tillemont, Louis-Sébastien Le Nain de. 1701, 1704. *Histoire des empereurs et des autres princes qui ont régné durant les six premiers siècles de l'Église*, Volumes Four and Five. Paris: chez Charles Robustel.
- Tomlin, Roger. 1973. *The Emperor Valentinian the First*. D.Phil dissertation, Oxford University.
- Tomlin, Roger. 1974. 'The Date of the 'Barbarian Conspiracy'' *Britannia* 5: 303-309.

- Topchyan, Aram. 2006. *The Problem of the Greek Sources of Movses Xorenac'i's History of Armenia*. Leuven: Peeters.
- Toynbee, Arnold J. 1965. *Hannibal's Legacy. The Hannibalic War's Effects on Roman Life*, Two Volumes. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Traina, Giusto. 2012. 'La Production Rurale Dans La Phase Finale Du Royaume De La Grande Arménie: Le Témoignage De Moïse De Khorène' *Antiquité Tardive* 20: 161-164.
- Trombley, Frank. 1999. 'Ammianus Marcellinus and Fourth-Century Warfare: A protector's Approach to Historical Narrative' in *The Late Roman World and Its Historian: Interpreting Ammianus Marcellinus*. Jan Willem Drijvers and David Hunt (eds.). Routledge: London and New York.
- Urbainczyk, Theresa. 1997. *Socrates of Constantinople: Historian of Church and State*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Urbainczyk, Theresa. 2002. *Theodoret of Cyrrhus: The Bishop and the Holy Man*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- van Berchem, Denis. 1952. *L'armée de Dioclétien et la réforme constantiniennne*. Paris: Imprimerie Nationale et Paul Geuthner.
- Vanderspoel, John. 1995. *Themistius and the Imperial Court: Oratory, Civic Duty, and Paideia from Constantius to Theodosius*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Verboven, Koenraad, Myriam Carlier, and Jan Dumolyn. 2007. 'A Short Manual to the Art of Prosopography' in *Prosopography Approaches and Applications. A Handbook*. Oxford: Unit for Prosopographical Research (Linacre College).
- Vervaet, Frederik Juliaan. 2002. 'Domitius Corbulo and the Senatorial Opposition to the Reign of Nero' *Ancient Society* 32: 135-193.
- Vervaet, Frederik Juliaan. 2007. 'The Reappearance of the Supra-Provincial Commands in the Late Second and Early Third Centuries CE: Constitutional and Historical Considerations' in *Crises and the Roman Empire: proceedings of the Seventh Workshop of the international network Impact of Empire, Nijmegen, June 20-24, 2006*. Olivier Hekster, Gerda de Kleijn, and Daniëlle Slootjes (eds.). Boston: Brill.
- Vetter, Emil. 1960. 'Das Grab des Flavius Merobaudes in Trier' *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie* 103.4: 366-372.

Vrej, Nersessian. 1979. 'Review of History of the Armenians' *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 30: 479-480.

Waas, Manfred. 1971. *Germanen Im Romischen Dienst (im 4. Jh. N. Chr.)*. Bonn: Rudolf Habelt.

Wallraff, Martin. 1997. *Der Kirchenhistoriker Sokrates: Untersuchungen zu Geschichtsdarstellung, Methode und Person*. Gottingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.

Wanke, Ulrich. 1990. *Die Gotenkriege des Valens: Studien zu Topographie und Chronologie im unteren Donaauraum von 366 bis 378 n. Chr.* Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.

Ward, J. H. 1974. 'The Notitia Dignitatum' *Latomus* 33: 397-434.

Watson, Alaric. 1999. *Aurelian and the Third Century*. London: Routledge.

Wenskus, Reinhard. 1961. *Stammesbildung und Verfassung: das Werden der frühmittelalterlichen Gentes*. Cologne: Böhlau.

Wijnendaele, Jeroen W. P. 2015. *The Last of the Romans: Bonifatius - Warlord and Comes Africae*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Williams, Stephen and Gerard Friell. 1994. *Theodosius: The Empire at Bay*. London: B.T. Batsford Ltd.

Williams, Stephen. 1985. *Diocletian and the Roman Recovery*. New York: Methuen.

Wolfram, Herwig. 1988. *History of the Goths*, Thomas J. Dunlap (trans.). Berkley: University of California Press.

Woods, David. 1995. 'The Fate of the *Magister Equitum* Marcellus' *The Classical Quarterly* 45: 266-268.

Woods, David. 1997. 'Ammianus and Some Tribuni Scholarum Palatinarum c. A. D. 353-64' *The Classical Quarterly* 47: 269-291.

Woods, David. 1999. 'The Final Commission of Artemius the Former dux Aegypti' *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 23: 2-24.

Woods, David. 2001. 'Dating Basil of Caesarea's Correspondence with Arinthaëus and his Widow' *Studia Patristica* 37: 301-307.

Woods, David. 2010. 'Ammianus versus Libanius on Barbatio's Alleged Bridge Across the Rhine' *Mnemosyne* 63: 110-116.

Woods, David. 2016. 'Constantius, Julian, and the Fall of Sirmium' in *Beginning and End: from Ammianus Marcellinus to Eusebius of Caesarea*, Álvaro Sánchez-Üstiz (ed.). Universidad de Huelva.

Woolf, Greg. 2012. 'Saving the Barbarian' in *Cultural Identity in the Ancient Mediterranean*, Erich S. Gruen (ed.). Los Angeles: Getty Publications.

Zuckerman, Constantin. 1998. 'Comtes et Ducs en Égypte Autour de l'an 400 et la Date de la Notitia Dignitatum Orientis' *Antiquité Tardive* 6: 137-147.

Appendix

All citations can be found in the *PLRE I*.

If the evidence for an individual's origins is not clearly stated in his *PLRE* entry and has instead been developed from inference or complex synthesis, a symbol will dictate how this conclusion has been reached, as follows:

- a Was considered to be a viable imperial successor and was therefore Roman
- b Became emperor and was therefore Roman
- c Son became emperor and was therefore Roman
- d Name is only used by other known Romans
- e Indicated to be a Roman from descriptions
- f Germanic name
- g Eastern name

Romans

Abundantius	Roman ^a	Severus 10	Roman ^a
Aequitius	Roman	Theodosius (the younger)	Roman ^b
Marcellus	Roman	Timasius	Roman
Flavius Theodosius	Roman ^c	Vetranio	Roman ^b
Sebastianus	Roman ^a		

Probably Romans

Nannienus	Probable Roman ^e	Sallustius	Probable Roman ^d
Romulus	Probable Roman ^d	Severus 8	Probable Roman ^d
Bonusus	Probable Roman ^d	Lupicinus	Probable Roman ^d
Hermogenes	Probable Roman ^d	Sabinianus	Probable Roman ^e
Saturninus	Probable Roman ^d	Eusebius	Probable Roman ^d

Unknowns

Traianus	Unknown	Quintinus	Unknown
Addaeus	Unknown	Barbatio	Unknown
Arbitio	Unknown	Jovinus	Unknown

Promotus	Unknown	Julius	Unknown
Andragathius	Unknown ⁷⁴⁸	Majorianus	Unknown ⁷⁴⁹
Lucillianus	Unknown ⁷⁵⁰		

Barbarians

Agilo	Barbarian	Bauto	Barbarian
Gildo	Barbarian	Silvanus	Barbarian
Modares	Barbarian	Stilicho	Barbarian
Nevitta	Barbarian	Malarichus	Barbarian
Arbogast	Barbarian	Victor	Barbarian
Richomeres	Barbarian		

Probably Barbarians

Merobaudes	Probable Barbarian ^f	Ellebichus	Probable Barbarian ^f
Arinthaesus	Probable Barbarian ^f	Salia	Probable Barbarian ^f
Rumoridus	Probable Barbarian ^f	Sapores	Probable Barbarian ^g
Butherichus	Probable Barbarian ^f	Gaiso	Probable Barbarian ^f
Dagalaifus	Probable Barbarian ^f	Gomoarius	Probable Barbarian ^f
Ursicinus	Probable Barbarian ^f		

⁷⁴⁸ Zos. 4.35.6 says that he came from the Black Sea, but does not make it clear whether this was the Roman or barbarian parts.

⁷⁴⁹ Majorianus was the maternal grandfather of emperor Majorian, but because the maternal grandfather of emperor Theodosius II was the barbarian Bauto, this does not preclude Majorianus from being a barbarian.

⁷⁵⁰ Lucillianus was the father-in-law of Jovian, but because Stilicho was the father-in-law of Honorius, this does not preclude Lucillianus from being a barbarian.