

AMMIANUS MARCELLINUS 26.4.5–6

Hoc tempore velut per universum orbem Romanum, bellicum canentibus bucinis, excitae gentes saevissimae, limites sibi proximos persultabant. Gallias Raetiasque simul Alamanni populabantur; Sarmatae Pannonias et Quadi; Picti Saxonesque et Scotti, et Attacotti Brittanos aerumnis vexavere continuis; Austoriani Mauricaeque aliae gentes, Africam solito acrius incursabant; Thracias et diripiebant praedatorii globi Gothorum. Persarum rex manus Armeniis iniectabat, eos in suam dicionem ex integro vocare vi nimia properans, sed iniuste, causando, quod post Ioviani excessum, cum quo foedera firmarat et pacem, nihil obstate debebit, quo minus ea recuperaret, quae antea ad maiores suos pertinuisse monstrabat.

At this time, as if war-trumpets were sounding throughout the Roman world, savage peoples were rising and pouring across the nearest frontier. Alamanns were devastating both Gaul and Raetia; Sarmatians and Quadi Pannonia; Picts, Saxons, Scots and Attacotti troubled the Britons continuously; Austorians and other Moorish peoples were invading Africa more fiercely than usual; raiding bands of Goths were plundering Thrace. The Persian king was laying hands on the Armenians in his haste to bring them forcibly under his control, unjustly pretending that after the death of Jovian, with whom he had made a peace treaty, nothing should prevent his regaining what he claimed had once belonged to his ancestors.¹

A new emperor, Valentinian, proclaimed on 25 February 364, has just co-opted his brother Valens (28 March). Ammianus summarizes the empire's external enemies 'at this time'. *Hoc tempore*. Does he mean the joint reign of Valentinian in the west (364–75) and Valens in the east (364–78), or only the moment of their accession? The question is worth discussing, if only because two important regional histories have recently taken this passage as evidence of barbarian invasions of Britain and Pannonia in 364, which are otherwise unattested.²

Ammianus uses the phrase *hoc tempore* only once elsewhere, to date an incident more or less precisely.³ The similar phrase *eo tempore* occurs ten times: six times of someone's official position at the time, and three times with reference to a more or less precise moment.⁴ Thus *hoc tempore* (26.4.5), in view of Ammianus' general usage, could be taken to mean the moment of the emperors' accession; but I will argue that it is better taken, like *eo tempore* at its tenth appearance, to mean a whole reign.⁵

¹ Text as edited by C. U. Clark (1915), but without the unnecessary lacuna posited after *Thracias et*. See also n. 28. Translation adapted from that by J. C. Rolfe in the Loeb Classical Library (revised edn., 1963).

² S. Frere, *Britannia: a History of Roman Britain* (2nd edn., 1974), p. 391; cf. D. J. Breeze and B. Dobson, *Hadrian's Wall* (1976), p. 220 ('in 364'). A. Mócsy, *Pannonia and Upper Moesia: a History of the Middle Danube Provinces of the Roman Empire* (1974), p. 291.

³ 27.3.1, 'hoc tempore vel paulo ante' sc. summer 366. (The actual date was some time before Oct. 364, see *PLRE* s.v. *Terentius* 1.)

⁴ 14.11.14; 15.3.10; 15.7.7; 18.6.20; 25.8.9; 29.6.3. 18.9.1; 27.8.5; 30.5.14, to which 14.11.14 and 25.8.9 could be added. I am grateful to Dr. R. I. Ireland for access to his concordance of Ammianus, s.v. *tempore*.

⁵ As O. Seeck pointed out long ago (*Hermes* 41 (1906), 517). He is followed by W. Seyfarth in his translation with commentary, vol. iv (1971), 21 with n. 39 (p. 307). Neither scholar thought the point needed arguing. 31.10.19, after a good beginning, the emperor Gratian neglected his duties at a time when even Marcus Aurelius would have found things difficult ('eo tempore quo etiam si imperium Marcus regeret Antoninus . . .').

If *hoc tempore* meant precisely spring 364, or even (more loosely) *c.* 365, we would expect to find these seven invasions described in Ammianus' narrative of the years 364–5. But only four can be found, with a little difficulty. Only two make an appearance in the narrative of the year 365, which is introduced with the words 'and this whole year inflicted heavy losses upon the Roman empire'.⁶ Then Ammianus briefly describes the initial stages of the Alamanns' invasion of Gaul, before embarking on a long and detailed account of Procopius' usurpation in the east. When this is over, he returns to the invasion of Gaul.⁷ This is the first invasion. The sixth (the Goths) can be discerned. In the closing stages of the usurpation (Procopius was killed on 27 May 366), 3,000 Goths crossed the Danube to help the usurper.⁸ However, Ammianus says nothing of any damage done by them; and according to him, Valens subsequently campaigned against them (367–9) in reprisal for the aid they had given an usurper, that is, for interfering in Roman internal affairs. But this objection cannot be pressed. Gothic 'allies' of this kind may well have done damage as they crossed Thrace; after all, they were known to be preparing an invasion even before Procopius' usurpation, which was clearly only a pretext.⁹

So far, then, the Alamanns (January 365) and the Goths (spring 366?). The other two (of the four invaders) are the Austerians and the Persians. The Austerians in fact first invaded the African province of Tripolitania in 363, but since their third and last invasion did not occur until *c.* 367, Ammianus postpones his narrative until the end of Book 28.¹⁰ Likewise, Persian attempts to control Armenia, which began in *c.* 364, are not described until the end of Book 27, presumably because the Romans did not intervene until the Gothic peace (369) freed the necessary troops.¹¹ These attempts are introduced with a little detail at 26.4.6, unlike the bare reference to the six other invasions (26.4.5), almost as if the narrative were about to begin; in fact when the narrative does begin (at 27.12.1), its language echoes that of the 'introduction'.¹² This inconsistency may be because Ammianus was thinking of Valens' original intention, which was to supervise his eastern frontier: he left for Syria in spring 365, merely sending reinforcements to the lower Danube frontier when news came of Gothic activity,

⁶ 26.5.6, 'omnisque hic annus dispendiis gravibus rem Romanam adflixit'.

⁷ Alamanns: 26.5.7, 9–14, and 27.1–2. Procopius: 26.5.8, and 26.6–10, cf. 27.2.10 (his head arrives in Gaul). For the interweaving of the two narratives, see N. H. Baynes, 'The Chronology of the Campaigns of Valentinian', *JRS* 18 (1928), 222–4 = *Byzantine Studies* (1960), pp. 317–20, whose chronology is adopted here.

⁸ 26.10.3, cf. 27.4.1, 5.1, 31.3.4. Zosimus' (Eunapius') 'ten thousand' (4.7.2) is a literary round figure.

⁹ 27.5.1, 'tyranno dederat adminicula'. 26.6.11, cf. 22.7.8 (regarded as unreliable in 362) and 27.5.2 (Procopius' claim to legitimacy a Gothic 'excusationem vanissimam').

¹⁰ 28.6.4, 'Ioviano etiam tum imperante', cf. 27.9.1, 'Africam vero, iam inde ab exordio Valentiniani imperii, exurebat barbarica

rabies . . .' (from the context it is clear this is Tripolitania). One of the delegates who complained of the third invasion died at Trier (29.6.20), which did not become Valentinian's capital until Sept./Oct. 367. For the chronology, see A. Demandt, 'Die tripolitanischen Wirren unter Valentinian I', *Byzantion* 38 (1968), 333–63.

¹¹ 27.12.13, the troops being commanded by the *magister peditum* Arintheus, who had taken part in peace negotiations with the Goths (27.5.9).

¹² W. Klein, *Studien zu Ammianus Marcellinus*, *Klio Beiheft* 13 (1914), 26–7. Compare 26.4.6 (quoted on p. 470) with 27.12.1, 'rex vero Persidis . . . calcata fide sub Ioviano pactorum, *inieciat Armeniam*, ut eam velut placitorum abolita *firmitate, ditioni iungeret suae.*'

until the usurpation of Procopius forced him to turn back. Five years later, after punishing Procopius' Gothic allies, he returned to the east; and this time there was effective Roman intervention in Armenia. Ammianus in a sense takes up his interrupted narrative.¹³ His chronology, it must be said, is not entirely clear. He says Persia remained on friendly terms 'for a short while' after the treaty of July 363, which he sometimes implies (wrongly) did not give Persia the right to invade Armenia; and he dates the first real Persian invasion to c. 369.¹⁴ However, he knows it was preceded by years of political intrigue and raiding; and we happen to know, from an Armenian source independent of Ammianus, that there had been numerous Persian incursions since c. 364.¹⁵

Thus four of Ammianus' seven invasions (26.4.5–6) can be dated to 363–5. Three of the invaders remained active for rather longer: the Austorians until c. 367, the Alamanns until 366 (peace was not made until 374), the Persians in Armenia until 378 (peace being made in 387).¹⁶ Their invasions therefore can be said to have occurred *during* the emperors' joint reign, rather than precisely at their accession. But let this pass for the moment. The other three invasions mentioned by Ammianus (26.4.5) are nowhere else attested in the period 363–5; and, by more than mere coincidence, invasions by these same peoples *later* in the joint reign became notorious.

(1) 'Sarmatians and Quadi [were devastating] Pannonia'

They had done so before, in 357, when they forced Constantius II to campaign against them. Their invasion of 374 forced Valentinian to make peace with the Alamanns after almost ten years' fighting, to take personal command on the Danube.¹⁷ The implication is that a Quado-Sarmatian invasion was serious enough to warrant an emperor's presence with his mobile army. If therefore these peoples had invaded Pannonia in 364, precisely when Valentinian travelled through the Danubian provinces on his way from Constantinople to Milan, we would expect Ammianus to have described their invasion—and the inevitable reprisal from this most military of emperors. But Ammianus says nothing. And in describing the Quadi in 374 as 'quiescent for a long time', he implies, though this cannot be conclusive, that the Quadi had been quiet since Constantius II imposed

¹³ Valens' movements: 26.6.11, sets out for Syria; 26.7.2, about to leave Cappadocian Caesarea for Antioch. His eventual entry into Antioch (29.1.4) implies his journey east in 370: for the evidence, see T. Mommsen (ed.), *Theodosian Code* (2nd edn., 1954), vol. i. 1, p. 249.

¹⁴ 27.12.1, 'cum suis paulisper nobis visus amicus'. Here, and at 26.4.6, Ammianus implies that Persia broke the treaty by invading Armenia, but from his own summary of its terms (25.7.12, confirmed by Zosimus 3.31.2, Libanius *or.* 24.9, and Faustus (see n. 15) 4.21) and other references to them (27.12.10, 15, 18, and 29.1.2), it is clear he knew that Rome was excluded from helping the Armenians. See Baynes (see n. 15), pp. 197–8. Arinthaëus' mission (see n. 11) was to prevent a second Persian invasion, 'si

[Armenios] exagitare procinctu gemino temptaverint Persae' (27.12.13).

¹⁵ Faustus of Buzanta ('Byzantium') 4.21–49, translated into French by J.-B. Émine, in V. Langlois (ed.), *Collection des historiens anciens et modernes de l'Arménie* (1872) [FHG v.2], pp. 258–66. See above all N. H. Baynes, 'Rome and Armenia in the Fourth Century', *EHR* 25 (1910), 625–43 = *Byzantine Studies* (1960), pp. 186–208, esp. 198.

¹⁶ Austorians: see n. 10. Alamanns: 27.2.10. There was a raid in 368 (27.10.1), after which they were excluded until 378 (31.10, cf. Zosimus 4.12.1). Peace treaty: 30.3.5. Persians: Baynes (see n. 15), esp. pp. 206–7.

¹⁷ 16.10.20, 17.12. 29.6, 30.3, 30.5.

pro-Roman chieftains after his successful counter-attack in 358.¹⁸ If he says nothing of any invasion in 364, he gives a detailed description of the invasion of 374, and Valentinian's reprisals (375). True, he had other reasons to describe these episodes: the invasion was indirectly due to his bugbear, the praetorian prefect Maximinus; and the reprisals ended with Valentinian's dramatic death from apoplexy. But, Ammianus apart, the invasion of 374 was noticed by contemporaries. At the time, it was used by a Christian exegete in Rome to confute the argument for astrology: did all the Pannonians have the same horoscope?¹⁹ A few years later, at Constantinople in c. 380, Jerome (a Dalmatian educated at Rome) twice alluded to the invasion in his *Chronicle*.²⁰ This disaster for the western empire even found its way into the Greek historical tradition. It was described by Eunapius of Sardis. More remarkably, the Antiochene orator Libanius in c. 379 included the 'Sarmatian' invasion of Illyricum, which he dated to 374, among the disasters which followed the unpunished death of the emperor Julian.²¹ None of these authors, it may be added, mentions any invasion in c. 365.²²

(2) 'Picts, Saxons, Scots, and Attacotti troubled the Britons continuously'

There had been trouble in 360, when the Caesar Julian sent his *magister militum* to deal with an invasion of Picts and Scots.²³ In 367 the news of a 'barbarian conspiracy' involving Picts, Attacotti, Scots, and (apparently in northern Gaul)²⁴

¹⁸ 29.6.1, 'Quadorum natio diu inexcita'. 17.12.8–16.

¹⁹ ps.-Augustine, *Quaestiones veteris et novi testamenti* (CSEL 50 (1908)), *quaestio* 115.49 (p. 334), 'quid dicemus de Pannonia, quae sic erasa est, ut remedium habere non possit?' Apart from this, we know only that the *quaestio* was written after the reign of Julian (ibid. 12). On its elusive author see A. Souter, *A Study of Ambrosiaster* (1905), esp. pp. 166–74 (writing during 370s).

²⁰ *Chron.* (ed. J. K. Fotheringham (1923)), pp. 328, 329), a. 372, 'Probus praefectus Illyrici iniquissimis tributorum exactionibus ante provincias quas regebat quam a barbaris vastarentur erasit'; a. 375. 'quia superiori anno Sarmatae Pannonias vastaverant, idem consules permansere'.

²¹ Zosimus 4.16.4, dated after the transfer of troops to Africa (372/3). Libanius, *or.* 24.12, dated by the irony of the ἀρχὴν of Illyricum being consul at the time. The allusion is not to the praetorian prefect of Illyricum, Italy, and Africa (368–75), Petronius Probus (*cos.* 371), as believed by *PLRE* s.v. *Probus* 5 (p. 737) and A. F. Norman, *Loeb Classical Library, Libanius*, i (1969), 500 n., but to the *magister militum* (365–75) Equitius (*cos.* 374), whose name appears on all the Danubian military building inscriptions of Valentinian's reign. See *PLRE* s.v. *Equitius* 2. He was the only *magister militum* of Illyricum, just as Probus was its only prefect, to be honoured

by Valentinian with the consulship.

²² If there had been one, some mention might have been expected from Jerome, whose origins gave him a special interest in the area; or from Libanius, whose thesis would have been reinforced by a disaster which followed the death of Julian more closely. The supporting arguments adduced by Mócsy (see n. 2), p. 291, are inconclusive. 'Recent' Sarmatian settlers seen by Ausonius in the Hunsrück in c. 370 (*Mosella*, 9) could well be prisoners from the campaigns of Constantius II (thus E. M. Wightman, *Roman Trier and the Treveri* (1970), p. 66). Barbarian incursions certainly might be prompted by the death of an emperor with whom a treaty had been made—but not necessarily. And if so, why not when Constantius II died (361)?

²³ *Amm. Marc.* 20.1.

²⁴ 27.8.5, 'Picti . . . itidemque Attacotti . . . et Scotti, per diversa vagantes, multa populabantur. Gallicanos vero tractus Franci et Saxones, isdem confines, quo quisque erumpere potuit, terra vel mari, praedis acerbis incendiisque, et captivorum funeribus omnium, violabant.' Ammianus' language indicates part of Gaul: cf. 27.2.11, there were minor battles in Gaul apart from the defeat of Alamann invaders, 'multa narratu minus digna . . . proelia, per tractus varios Galliarum.' The Saxon invasion of northern Gaul in 370 may have been seaborne: 28.5.1, 'erupit . . . Saxonum multitudo, et Oceani difficultatibus

Franks and Saxons, diverted Valentinian from his intended counter-attack upon the Alamanns. He made instead for the Channel coast, first sending two senior generals to report, and then the *comes* Theodosius with an army, with which he restored order by the end of 368.²⁵ Valentinian's vigorous response strongly suggests that this was the first invasion of Britain in his reign—not that there had been a 'dress rehearsal' two years before. In summer 365 he left Milan for northern Gaul, arriving at Paris in mid-October; from here he directed operations against the Alamann invaders. There is no word of any trouble in Britain.²⁶ The only problem is a discrepancy between the two lists of 'conspirators'.²⁷ Picts, Scots, and Attacotti occur in both; but the Saxons are variously included among the enemies of Britain (26.4.5) and located with the Franks in northern Gaul (27.8.5).²⁴ The names of the enemies of Britain at 26.4.5, and indeed the 'Britons' themselves, have been corrupted in our manuscript tradition, and have been restored by the emendations of sixteenth-century editors.²⁸ It is possible the text is more corrupt than they thought, and that Ammianus extended (or confined) the activity of the Saxons to northern Gaul. After all, the passage is introduced by the generalization that savage peoples attacked the nearest frontier—which for the Saxons was in northern Gaul.²⁹ The nature and extent of the 'barbarian conspiracy' is a notorious problem. Even if Ammianus' phrase should not be taken too literally, it does at least imply that a combination of invaders on this scale had not occurred before. Theodosius had to fight his way from Richborough to London through 'roving bands of enemy raiders'.³⁰ The civilians of Roman Kent

permeatis Romanum limitem gradu petebat intento', cf. 30.7.8 (a reference to the same raid), 'Saxonas . . . delatosque tunc <ad maritimos> tractus.' *ad maritimos* is Gelenius' supplement of a lacuna in V, with or without the warrant of the lost manuscript M. It recalls (whether legitimately or not) the title of an officer killed in the barbarian conspiracy, the *comes maritimi tractus* (27.8.1). He is commonly identified with the *comes litoris Saxonici per Britanniam* first attested in the *Notitia Dignitatum* (Occ. 28) in c. 395—Ammianus commonly uses a 'literary' periphrasis of official titles and terminology. S. Johnson has suggested (*The Roman Forts of the Saxon Shore* (1976), p. 144) from the *Notitia*'s description of two Gallic coastal forts as being 'in litore Saxonico' (Occ. 37.2 = 14; 38.3 = 7) that in 367 the *comes litoris Saxonici* was still responsible for both Channel coasts. (In 370 the Saxons were first opposed by a regional *comes* in northern Gaul (28.5.1), but unfortunately his full title is not given). This would help resolve the apparent discrepancy between 26.4.5 and 27.8.5 (see pp. 474 f.), by implying that Saxon raids fell indifferently on both Britain and Gaul. See further, n. 32.

²⁵ 27.8, 28.3. The best account is by S. Frere, *Britannia* (1974), pp. 391 ff. For the chronology adopted here, see *Britannia* 5 (1974), 303–9.

²⁶ 26.5.8 with *CTh* 11.1.13 (18 Oct. 365,

dat. Parisiis).

²⁷ Ammianus' term 'barbarica conspiratio' (27.8.1) perhaps should not be pressed: thus I. A. Richmond, *Roman and Native in North Britain* (1961), p. 121, 'a secret plan for concerted action among the barbarians'; S. Frere, *Britannia* (1974), p. 391, 'united planning of the foes of Roman Britain'. The Quadi and Sarmatians concerted their invasions (17.12.8, 29.6.8), but they had been land-neighbours for centuries. How did the war-bands of Ireland, Scotland, and north-west Germany communicate, let alone negotiate? 'Conspiratio' is no more than a dramatic way of saying the attacks occurred at the same time: cf. 16.3.3, (Franks and Alamanns) 'conspiratas gentes in noxam Romani nominis'; 26.6.11, 'gentem Gothorum . . . conspirantem in unum'.

²⁸ See Clark's apparatus criticus ad loc. The list had become *recti saxonisque et secuti et ata citi uritanos*.

²⁹ 28.5.1, quoted in n. 24.

³⁰ 27.8.7, 'adortus est vagantes hostium vastatorias manus'. Rolfe (see n. 1) translates the preceding words 'egressus tendensque ad Lundinium' by 'he began his march and came to London', but quite apart from the real meaning of *tendens* (of uncompleted action), it is clear that London was reached (and relieved from siege) *after* this initial campaign—which therefore must be located between Richborough and London.

may not have known, and Theodosius' troops may not have cared, what these were. The Saxons may have used ships in their attack on northern Gaul; if so, they could well have descended on both shores of the Channel.³¹ Theodosius is said, by sources independent of Ammianus but less explicit, to have defeated the Saxons in the course of his British campaigns.³² It certainly does not seem worth pressing the discrepancy between 26.4.5 and 27.8.5, to argue that the Saxons tidy-mindedly attacked Britain in 365 and northern Gaul in 367. But another problem raised by the Saxons in Ammianus will be discussed later (below, pp. 476 f.).

(3) 'other Moorish peoples were invading Africa'

Ammianus can only be referring to the troubles which followed the death of an important client-chieftain in Mauretania Caesariensis called Nubel. In the family quarrel which followed, the Roman military commander in Africa supported Nubel's pro-Roman son Sammac against another son, Firmus, who murdered him. 'It caused disorders and fighting', Ammianus comments, by which he means the revolt of Firmus.³³ The provincial capital Caesarea (Cherchel) was sacked, and Icosium (Algiers) fell into rebel hands. The revolt began in c. 372, and was only repressed with heavy casualties after two years' campaigning (373–4) by Valentinian's inevitable hatchet-man, Theodosius.³⁴ Ammianus couples the revolt

³¹ See above, n. 24.

³² A fragmentary inscription found near Stobi (AE 1931, 53, published with commentary by R. Egger, 'Der erste Theodosius', *Byzantion* 5 (1929–30), 9–32 = idem, *Römische Antike und frühes Christentum* (2nd edn., 1967), i. 126–43) describes Theodosius as 'terror of Saxony', μέγα δῖμα Σαξονείης. An anonymous Latin translation of Josephus' *Jewish War*, once attributed to Ambrose and written by a contemporary, refers to Roman defeats of Scots and Saxons (described as pirates protected by marshes) in the context of Britain. This passage was inserted by the author into his translation of Josephus' speech to the defenders of Jerusalem (*BJ* 5.362 ff.), and probably refers to Theodosius' victories of 367/8. *Hegesippi qui dicitur Historiae libri V* (CSEL 66 (1932 and 1960)), 5.15.1 (pp. 319–20), 'quid vobis cum victoribus universae terrae, quibus secreta oceani et extrema Indiae patent? quid adtexam Britannia interfuso mari a toto orbe divisas, sed a Romanis in orbem terrarum redactas? tremit hos Scotia, quae terris nihil debet, tremit Saxonia inaccessa paludibus et inviis saepa regionibus, quae licet furta belli videatur audere, et ipsa frequenter captiva Romanis accessit triumphis. validissimum genus hominum perhibetur et praestans ceteris, piraticis tamen myoparonibus, non viribus nititur, fugae potius quam bello paratum.' Panegyrics of Theodosius' son the emperor, and of his grandson Honorius, also connect

his defeat of the Saxons with the British campaign. *Pan. Lat.* 12(2).5.2, 'atritam pedestribus proeliis Britanniam referam? Saxo consumptus bellis navalibus offeretur. redactum ad paludes suas Scotum loquar?' (cf. *ibid.* 4, *Saxonicus* suggested as one of his titles). Claudian, *de IV cons. Hon.* 24–40, summarizes Theodosius' career, esp. 31, 'maduerunt Saxone fuso Orcades; incaluit Pictorum sanguine Thyle'. (Cf. *Epith.* 219, 'Mauro vel Saxone victis'.)

³³ 29.5.2, 'discordias excitavit et bella'.

³⁴ 29.5. For the social and geographical background to the revolt and its suppression, see J. Matthews, 'Maurétania in Ammianus and the Notitia', in R. Goodburn and P. Bartholomew (eds.), *Aspects of the Notitia Dignitatum* (1976), pp. 157–88. For the chronology see A. Demandt, 'Die Feldzüge des älteren Theodosius', *Hermes* 100 (1972), 81–113, at 94 ff. He prefers a date of 370 for the outbreak of the revolt (*ibid.* 100) because Remigius was still *magister officiorum* shortly before (29.5.2). He argues from Amm. Marc. 28.1.12, 41, and 30.2.10, that Remigius was succeeded by Leo before Maximinus became praetorian prefect (July/August 371), that is, spring 371. (Other references: *PLRE* s.v. *Leo* 1 and *Maximinus* 7). But the argument is not conclusive: the passages from Ammianus prove only that Leo (then a *notarius*) was recalled to the imperial court before his friend Maximinus; and that he succeeded Remigius. The two events were not necessarily simul-

with the Austorian raids, but there was no connection of time or place: the two cities most affected, Caesarea and Lepcis Magna, are some 650 miles apart as the crow flies. Five years elapsed between these disorders at opposite extremes of the diocese of Africa.

To conclude, therefore. Three of Ammianus' seven invasions do not fall within the period of Valentinian's and Valens' accession (364, or even *c.* 365), but rather in 367 (Britain), *c.* 372 (Mauretania Caesariensis), and 374 (Pannonia). This being so, the 'raiding bands of Goths' are more naturally taken as a reference to the catastrophe of the period 364–78, than to the brief intervention of Procopius' 3,000 'allies'. After peace in 369, the Visigoths were quiescent until 376, when the migrating Huns forced them to seek refuge in the Roman empire. Valens allowed them to cross the Danube; and many of the Ostrogoths (also refugees) crossed surreptitiously. The situation got out of hand, and the Goths rebelled, overrunning Thrace.³⁵ Valens tried to regain control by using his army, but was defeated and killed at Adrianople (378), leaving the Goths at large.

So let us take 26.4.5–6 as a summary of the principal invasions of the empire (Armenia included) during the joint reign of 364–78. Three of them happen to have occurred in *c.* 364, but they are mentioned here as part of the 'introduction' to the whole reign. They are described later. The invasions are not listed chronologically, but in something of a geographical order, in that the five invasions of the western (Valentinian's) empire are taken first. Within each half of the empire, the invasions are listed in descending order of importance. The western list is headed by the two invasions which required the emperor's personal attention, that of the Alamanns for most of his reign (365–74). In the eastern list, the Gothic invasion takes pride of place over the Persians in Armenia, since it destroyed two-thirds of the east Roman mobile army.

This interpretation of 26.4.5–6 is supported by the retrospective summary in Ammianus' 'obituary' of Valentinian of his military achievements. These were the defence of Gaul against the Alamanns; the destruction of a Saxon raiding band (in northern Gaul); the restoration of order in Britain; the suppression of Firmus' revolt; and, if he had lived, he would have avenged the Illyrian disaster (the invasion of Pannonia).³⁶ The correspondence with 26.4.5 is close. The Austorians are omitted, since this was not one of Valentinian's successes. The only difficulty is the inclusion of the Saxons—as enemies of Gaul. Their un-

taneous: as *PLRE* reasonably says, Leo was 'presumably promoted soon afterwards'. In any case, we do not know what interval elapsed between Remigius' interception of Firmus' complaints (29.5.2) and Firmus' realization (*ibid.* 3): an official letter from the court in Gaul might take three months (*CTh* 11.1.13, 365–6) or even six (*CTh* 8.7.12, 372) to reach even Carthage. Demandt suggests that there was almost a three-years interval before Theodosius arrived with an army, during which the *comes Africae* Romanus vainly tried to contain the revolt. This is not stated by Ammianus (no admirer of Romanus), who indeed implies otherwise, by saying that Theodosius was sent to crush the revolt before it grew too strong, (29.5.4) '[*lacuna*] hostis

implacabilis incrementis virium adulesceret abolendum'. But even if the revolt be dated to 370, my argument is unaffected that Ammianus cannot have referred it to *c.* 365.

³⁵ Amm. Marc. 31, esp. 31.8.9, 'barbari tamen, velut diffractis caveis bestiae, per *Thraciarum* amplitudines fusius incitati . . .' (*Thraciarum* being a reasonable emendation of the *spatiarum* (etc.) of the manuscripts dependent on V, which is itself defective here).

³⁶ 30.7.5–10. Valens, like Constantius II (21.16, esp. 15), is not credited with military achievements in his 'obituary' (31.14), no doubt because, such as they were, they were eclipsed by his part in Rome's greatest military disaster since Cannae.

successful raid of 370 was described in some detail.³⁷ It was one of many raids: they were 'already glutted with Roman blood'; even treachery was justifiable, to wipe them out 'at last'.³⁸ Sudden Saxon raids were commonplace: Ammianus used them as a simile for the guerrilla tactics of a Syrian tribe of brigands.³⁹ The raid of 370, however, was remarkable enough for it to find its way into Jerome's *Chronicle*, though it is clear that it was its defeat, not its happening, which was a matter for remark.⁴⁰ If the text of 26.4.5 (as emended) is sound, then it is strange that Ammianus made no mention of Saxon raids in Gaul. He may have been content to name them once (as enemies of Britain, as it happened). The Franks are omitted. Apart from the mention of them at 27.8.5, there is almost no evidence that they caused trouble in the reign of Valentinian.⁴¹

In spite of this inconsistency of the Saxons, which cannot be resolved, it seems that Ammianus intended a summary catalogue of the principal invasions of 364–78. It stands aloof from its immediate context: else it would be absurd that this list of wars and disasters is immediately followed by the words 'Thus after a peaceful winter . . .'⁴² The catalogue must be understood as an introduction to the troubled reign of two military emperors (Valens against his will), when the often simultaneous crises made it difficult to write a continuous narrative.⁴³ Some episodes lasted more than a year, but are confined to a single 'chapter', even at the risk of dislocating the chronological sequence of the book. The narrative of the Tripolitanian affair (28.6) is anticipated by an odd little passage (27.9.1–3) sandwiched between an account of Theodosius' first campaign in Britain (autumn 367) and an Isaurian outbreak involving the death of a *vicarius Asiae* (apparently 367/8). Ammianus says there were barbarian raids in Africa (Tripolitania, as the context makes clear) aggravated by military corruption. 'But', he continues, 'the full sequence of events in this area, including the deaths of the governor Ruricius and of the delegates, and other sad events, I will describe more carefully when my plan requires it'.⁴⁴ This passage, which is used to anchor a fierce digression on 'military arrogance', has otherwise much the same function as 26.4.5–6: it anticipates a full narrative to follow.⁴⁵ There seems to be no really close parallel in Ammianus' text. Julian's achievements in Gaul are introduced with what Ammianus himself recognizes as a 'panegyric' notice; it closes with a brief summary of Julian's career—the student from Athens who defeated the

³⁷ 28.5.1–7, cf. 30.7.8.

³⁸ 28.5.1, 'saepe nostrorum funeribus pasta'; *ibid.* 7, 'manum latronum exitialem tandem copia data consumptam'.

³⁹ 28.2.12.

⁴⁰ *Chron. a.* 373 [sic], 'Saxones caesi Deusone in regione Francorum', reworked by Orosius, 7.32.10.

⁴¹ An inscription of Dec. 369 credits Valentinian with the title *Francicus Maximus* (ILS 771). *Pan. Lat.* 12(2).5.2 credits the *comes* Theodosius with activity on the Rhine or Waal. Demandt (see n. 34), 82–4, from this suggests that one of the minor campaigns of 366 (Amm. Marc. 27.2.11) was a defeat of the Franks by Theodosius. But there is no sound evidence, and *Francicus* is absent from the titles (*Saxonicus*, *Sarmaticus*,

Alamannicus) offered to Theodosius by the panegyrist (*ibid.* 5.4).

⁴² 26.5.1, 'acta igitur tranquillius hieme . . .'. The division by chapters is of course not Ammianus' own, but that of his great editor (1636) Valesius.

⁴³ 26.5.15. See Baynes (see n. 7).

⁴⁴ 27.9.3, 'gestorum autem per eas regiones seriem plenam, et Ruricii praesidis legatorumque mortem, et cetera luctuosa, cum adegerit ratio, diligentius explicabo.'

⁴⁵ Another such promise occurs at 28.1.57, where ('ut postea tempestive dicetur') the executions of Maximinus and his successors as *vicarius urbis Romae* in the reign of Gratian are briefly mentioned. This promise, for reasons unknown, was not kept.

German kings.⁴⁶ Retrospectively, when he comes to write Julian's 'obituary', Ammianus summarizes the disasters caused by German and Persian invasions in the reign of Constantius II, the situation that Julian tried to remedy by vigorous counter-offensives.⁴⁷ This summary follows a reference to a lost book, where Ammianus explained how Constantine provoked the Persian war which broke out after his death. If we had Ammianus' narrative of the accession of Constantine's three sons in 337, we might find it included a summary of the external enemies of their reign. It would make a familiar list to anyone who read 26.4.5–6. But this can only be speculation. The nearest parallel is the gloomy catalogue with which Tacitus prefaced the *Histories*: trouble in Illyricum, Gaul disaffected, Britain half-abandoned, attacks from Sarmatians and other Danubian peoples, the threat of invasion from the east.⁴⁸ Not much had changed. Ammianus' purpose was the same as Tacitus': not to summarize an immediate crisis which forced Valentinian into dividing the imperial power at his accession, but to give an outline of the complicated military history of the ensuing reigns.⁴⁹

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⁴⁶ 16.1, esp. 3, 'ad laudativam paene materiam pertinebit', and 5 (his career).

⁴⁷ 25.4.25–7. But neither this summary nor that in 16.1.5 is anything like as detailed as that in 30.7.5–10. In some ways a closer parallel with 26.4.5–6 for the reign of Julian occurs at 22.7.10, a list of the exotic delegations received by him.

⁴⁸ *Histories* 1.2, 'turbatum Illyricum, Galliae nutantes, perdomita Britannia et statim missa, coortae in nos Sarmatarum ac Sueborum gentes, nobilitatus cladibus mutuis Dacus, mota prope etiam Parthorum arma falsi Neronis ludibrium.' Ammianus did Tacitus the compliment of beginning where

the *Histories* ended, and adapted a few of his phrases, but any extensive influence remains to be proved.

⁴⁹ A. Piganiol, in what remains the best history of the fourth century (*L'Empire chrétien* (2nd. edn., 1972), 170), translates Amm. Marc. 26.4.5, and comments 'Ce sont sans doute ces dangers qui ont déterminé Valentinien à accepter le partage du pouvoir.' Some, but not all, of these dangers were apparent in 364; the logic of dividing the imperial power was based on wider and older premisses than what might have been happening in that year.