

A PANNONIAN REFUGEE OF QUALITY AT SALONA

J. J. WILKES

I. THE MONUMENT

AN INSCRIPTION DISCOVERED IN 1878 (see plates I-II and figure 1) re-used in a church at Split, near Salona the capital of Roman Dalmatia, was for many years believed to attest an unusual and improbable contact between Britain and the Mediterranean World in the early fifth century of our era. The text survives on two blocks of local limestone, the larger right-hand block having been more recently broken into roughly four quarters. It may be transcribed thus:

*Clarissima fem[i]na civis Pannonia vixit
annos triginta [in sa]ec(ulo) administrante vir(o) duo-
bus filiis derilic[tis f]nem naturae conflevit sub di[e]
XVIII kal(endas) Ianuari[as] DD(ominis) NN(ostris) Ticeodosio undecies
et Valen[tinian]o p(er)p(etuis) Augg(ustis)*

A noble lady, a Pannonian citizen, lived in this mortal life for thirty years with her husband as guardian, leaving behind two children. She ended her life-span on the eighteenth day before the Kalends of January, when our lords Theodosius, for the eleventh time, and Valentinian, everlasting emperors, were consuls. (15 December 425)

The text given here is similar to that published by O. Hirschfeld in the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* 3 Suppl. 1 no. 9515 (cf. Diehl, *Inscriptiones Latinae Christianae Veteres* 185), except for line 1 where *civis Pannonia* replaces *civis Dunnonia* (on which see below); and also by Fr. Bulić in his original entry to the catalogue of Split Museum (p. 247 no. 86A) and by M. Glavinić who first published the stone in *Bulletino di archeologia e storia dalmata* vol. 3 (1886) p. 18. To my knowledge the stone has not been examined or republished since then.¹

The stone is approximately 15 cms. thick. Although there is no conclusive evidence, there seems to be little doubt that it once formed the side panel of a burial sarcophagus. The letters, which are between 6 and 8 cms. in height, were formed with a pointed chisel hammered vertically at the face of the stone. They are markedly inferior to the general standard of lettering on the Salona monuments of this period. There is only one ligature, FINEM in line 3, while the shaping of some letters, for example R and N, is not consistent. The surface of the stone is now damaged through exposure and re-use. Some of this has obviously

¹I should like to thank Dr Nenad Cambi of the Archaeological Museum in Split for assistance in examining the stone and for supplying the photographs.

occurred since the Roman period, but nevertheless it is clear that the surface of the stone was never dressed properly by a stonemason. In the *CIL* publication Hirschfeld indicates only three stops (line 1: *Pannonia · vixit*, line 2: *administrante · viro*, and line 4: *Ianuaris · DD*), but it is possible to detect a further four (line 1: *fnem · naturae*, line 4: *kal · Ianuarias*, and line 5: *Valen[tinian]o · pp · Augg*).

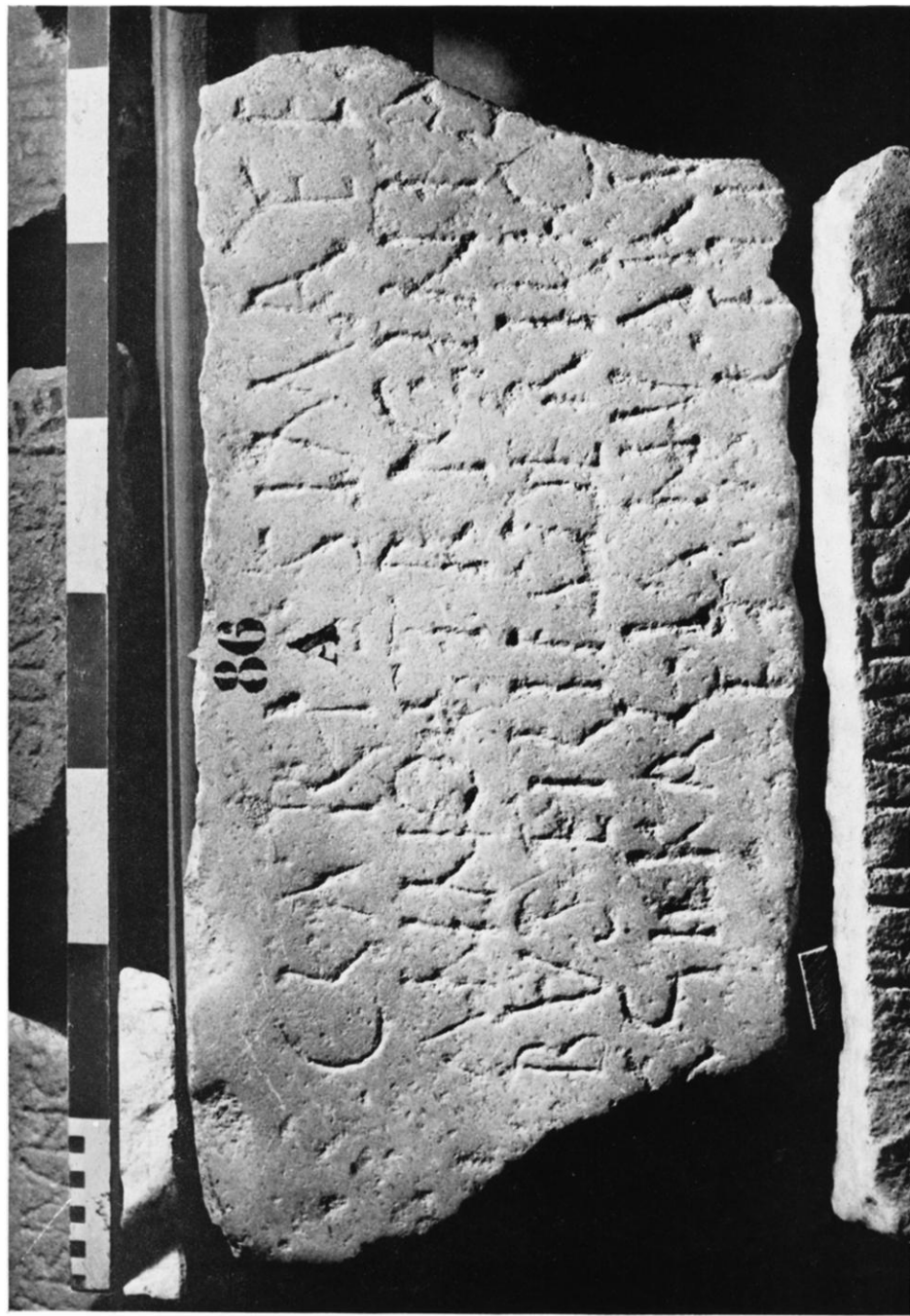
It is not recorded where the monument originally stood or from where it was brought. The church of St. Rainer, in which it was re-used, is built into the upper part of the north gate (*porta aurea*) of Diocletian's Palace. Most probably it was taken from one of the major early Christian cemeteries around Salona (Manastirine, Marusinac, Kapljuč, and Crkvina), as was certainly the case with many other monuments used in the mediaeval adaptations of Diocletian's Palace.

Line 1. The lady commemorated by the monument is not named but mentioned only as *clarissima femina*, which was the accepted style for a person of senatorial family. It is not clear whether or not her name appeared on another part of the monument; certainly as it stands the text appears complete. The deceased's name could have been inscribed along the edge of the sarcophagus lid, with the main text of the epitaph (in the form in which it survives) being placed on the side of the sarcophagus itself. It was far from being a humble monument, and there are one or two other examples of expensive sarcophagi in the Salona cemeteries being inscribed in the most unprepossessing manner.

Clarissimus was once a proud and exclusive title in the Roman social order, but as it became diffused more and more widely among the upper classes in the late fourth and early fifth centuries it lost a good deal of its prestige. Under Valentinian I (364–375) subdivisions began to emerge within the senatorial order with the conferring of titles such as *illustris* or *spectabilis*. These were obtained through tenure, actual or honorary, of posts in the highest grades of the imperial government. A senator and his family could style themselves *clarissimi* by hereditary right, but this was hardly any dignity for the son of a man who had held a post which carried with it the title of *illustris*.² Nevertheless, even if our unnamed lady was the wife or daughter of some undistinguished member of the Roman senate, she will still have been a great lady in relation to the mass of the population, and her death and funeral will have been a major occasion in the life of Salona.

At no time in its history was Roman Dalmatia notable for the number of senators who resided there. A few families who were in the main descended from Italian colonists did rise to that status but, when compared with other areas such as Narbonensis, Tarraconensis, and Baetica,

²A. H. M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire 284–602* (Oxford 1964) vol. 2, p. 528.



A PANNONIAN REFUGEE OF QUALITY AT SALONA (b. 395 d. 425)

PLATE 2

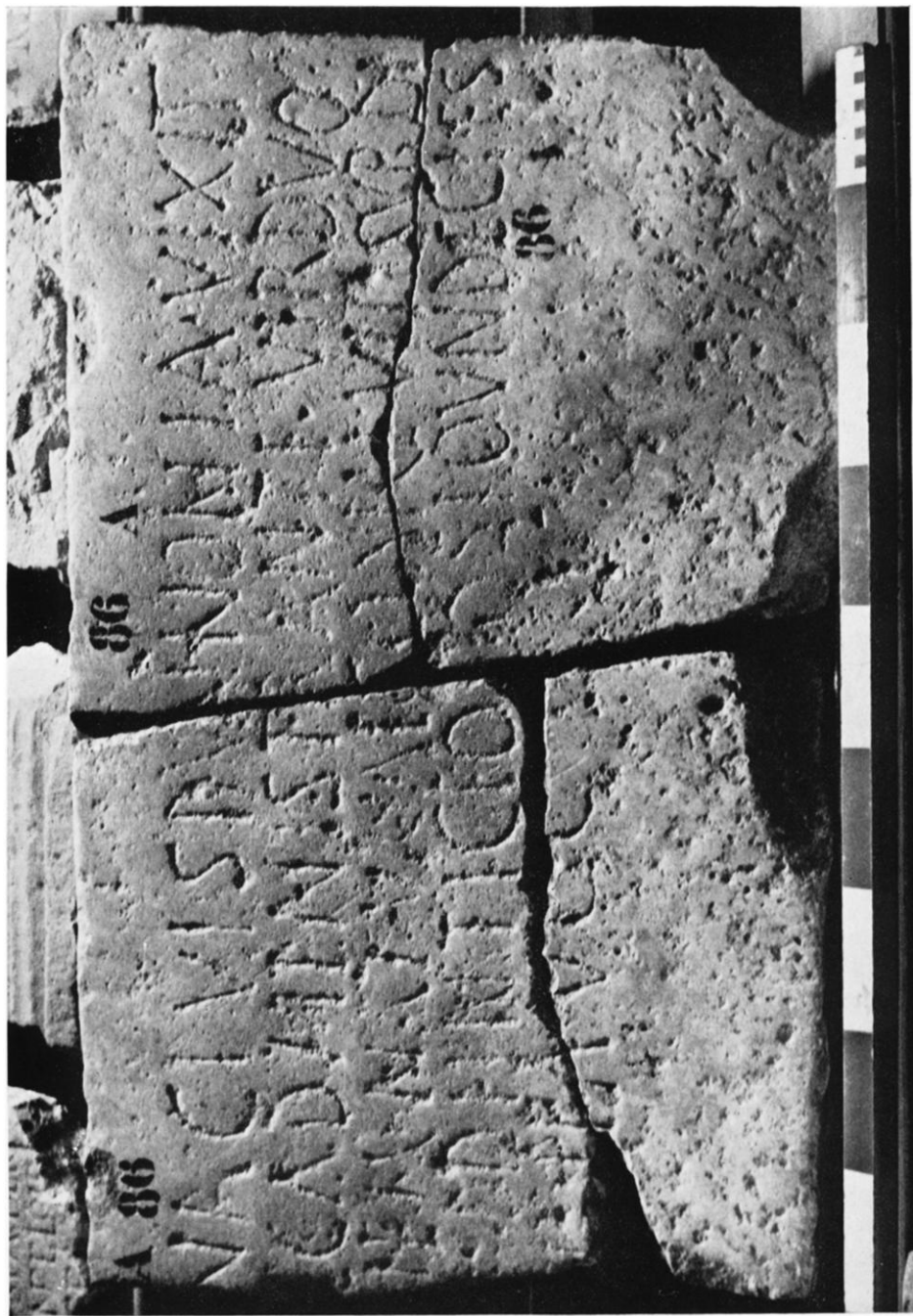
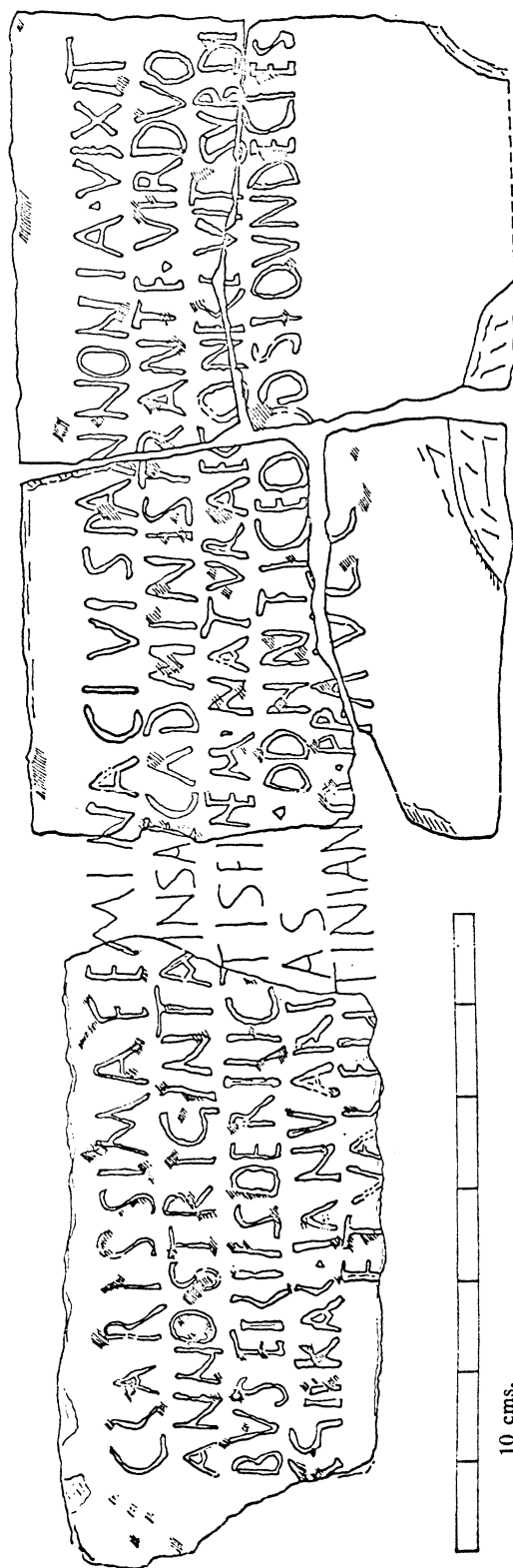


FIGURE 1



A PANNONIAN REFUGEE OF QUALITY AT SALONA (b.395, d.425)

they are not an impressive group.³ Even fewer are the instances of senatorial families emerging from the native population of the province. A *c(larissima) f(emina)*, probably of the second century, is known at Maluesa in the northeast of Dalmatia. She is recorded, along with her bailiff (*vilicus*), on the tombstone of her nurse. Her family had received its Roman citizenship as late as the Flavian period (69–96).⁴ At Salona, where the majority of the senatorial families known in Dalmatia are attested, there is Casconia Marcellina, who died at the age of 57, along with her daughter who had the same names, who are both styled *c(larissima) f(emina)*.⁵ In the later fourth century two *clarissimae* are recorded in the Manastirine cemetery, one of whom died in 395, the year in which our unknown Pannonian lady was born.⁶

The only change in reading of the inscription which is proposed here is to read *Pannonia* instead of *Dunnonia* in line 1. The photographs (see especially plate II) were made under difficult conditions, and the crucial letters P and A are perhaps not as discernable here as they are on the stone itself. Certainly the left-hand stroke of the A is visible, while the curious form of P can be compared to the two examples in line 5. The shallow horizontal stroke of the A can be detected clearly by touching the surface of the stone. In spite of the damage which has been caused to the surface at this point it seems clear that the DV read by Bulić and accepted by Hirschfeld cannot be supported.

The original editors linked the reading *Dunnonia* with the Dumnonii of Cornwall and Devon in southwest Britain. Some years ago C. E. Stevens

³J. J. Wilkes, *Dalmatia* (London 1969) 318 ff., and more fully Géza Alföldy, 'Senatoren in der römischen Provinz Dalmatia', *Epigraphische Studien* 5 (1968) 99–144.

⁴*CIL* 3.8350 = *Srpska (kraljevska) Akademija Spomenik* 98 (1941–1948) no. 479 (with photograph and drawing): *d.m. Fl(avia) Tattae libertae et nutrici def(unctae) an(nos) L Fl(avia) Prisca c(larissima) f(emina) et Dazieri vil(ico) vivo p(osuit)*. Alföldy, *op. cit.* (above, n. 3) 131 note 203, prefers to read: *Dazi(o) fr(atr) i(psius)?* On grants of citizenship by the Flavians to the native population of the province, see Wilkes, *op. cit.* (above, n. 3) 288 f.

⁵*CIL* 3.1986 cf. p. 1030 (8712): *Casconiae Marcellinae cl(arissimae) f(eminae) matri pientissimae quae vix(it) an(nos) LVII Casconia Marcellina cl(arissima) f(emina) filia et heres si quis hoc sepulchrum tentaverit aperire dederit fisco SS L milia*. Alföldy, *op. cit.* (above, n. 3) 138, suggests that these ladies did not come from Dalmatia but from elsewhere, probably Italy, since the *gentilicium* Casconius is not otherwise recorded in the province.

⁶*CIL* 3.12861 (9523) = R. Egger, *Forschungen in Salona* 2 (1926) p. 84 no. 116: *depositio Augustin(ae) c(larissimae) f(eminae) die III Non(as) Iulias co[ns]ulibus] Olyb[ri]o et Probino (4 July 395). CIL 3.9574 = Egger, p. 76 no. 84: *Deogratia c(larissima) f(emina) deposita die XVIII* [...]. Also an early fourth-century monument in the Manastirine cemetery: Egger, p. 73 no. 74: *Ant(onio) Tauro ex dua[b]us c(entenariis) ducentario post facto, qui vixit annis LV Ael(ia) Saturnina c(larissima) f(emina) marito benignissimo*. Married to a lady of senatorial family Antonius Taurus was probably procurator of the province in the Constantinian period.*

discussed the possibilities which could account for this lady's journey from Britain to Dalmatia in the early years of the fifth century.⁷ It is sad to report that the starting point for his brilliant study has now ceased to exist. The lady is from Pannonia, the great Danubian province adjoining Dalmatia on the north, and not from the remote southwest of Britain.

Line 2. She died aged thirty, leaving two children. The restoration [*in sa*]ec(ulo) seems to be the most appropriate, although these letters require slightly more space than seems to be allowed for by the break in fem[i]na in line 1 (see the drawing in figure 1). On the other hand, the spacing of the letters generally throughout the text is far from consistent, and there could have been a ligature. *Saeculum* is often used by Christian writers for the span of mortal life on earth.⁸ The formula *administrante vir(o)* indicates that she had been the legal ward of the man who later became her husband. The omission of his name, from whom she may have acquired her senatorial status, is no less curious than the apparent absence of the deceased's own name. The use of *vir* for husband (more usual is *maritus*) is rare on tombstones of this type and period.

Line 3. The form *derilictis*, for *derelectis*, is comparable with variations on other Dalmatian tombstones of the later period; *vixill[atio]* for *vexillatio*, *diffunctam* for *def(f)unctam*, and *infliciss[imi]* for *infelicissimi*.⁹ At the end of the line *complevit* must surely be understood for *conflevit*. The latter is ungrammatical, while the expression *annos complere* for death is as old as Cicero and Ovid.¹⁰

Lines 4-5. The lady died on the 15 December 425, the precise date being fixed by the traditional Roman Calendar and the year by the consulships of the two emperors. The use of *G* or *C* to indicate the numeral VI in the date appears in other upper classes epitaphs of the same period at Salona. One was a monument that was broken up and also transported for use in a mediaeval building within Diocletian's Palace, and, by coincidence, belongs to another person from Pannonia (*Panno[nius]*).¹¹ A third example is found on a Christian epitaph at Sirmium (Mitrovica) in

⁷"A lady of quality from Roman Devonshire," *Report and Transactions of the Devonshire Association* 84 (1952) 172-177. For other examples of this origin compare *CIL* 8. 8190 (Ruscade): *Fl(avia) Amanda civis Pan(nonia), ILCV* 4456 (Rome): *Aurelia Marciana civis Pannonia*, and *CIL* 6. 2501 (Rome): *Aurelia Crescentina civis Pannonia*.

⁸Prudentius, *Cathemerinon* 5. 109, *Peristephanon* 2. 584. Sedulius 4. 291. Paulinus of Nola, *Ep.* 23. 33. Also numerous instances by Jerome and St. Augustine.

⁹*CIL* 3.14704 (Salona), 12749 (8375) (Gradac, west of Sarajevo), 12779 (Mali Mošunj near Travnik).

¹⁰Cicero, *De Senectute* 5. Ovid, *Tristia* 4. 7, 77; *Metamorphoses* 15. 816, cf. 3. 312.

¹¹*CIL* 3. 9608]GO Panno[nius? dep[os]itus C [k(alendas)] Oc[s]o[bres].

Pannonia.¹² The fixing of the year by holders of the consulship appears in the normal form except for the curious mis-spelling of Theodosius II as *Ticeodosio*. He ruled at Constantinople from 408 to 450 and had already been emperor for seventeen years when he held his eleventh consulship, whereas his colleague Valentinian III (425–455) had been proclaimed Augustus in the West less than two months before the death of our senatorial lady at Salona (23 October 425).

II. THE END OF ROMAN PANNONIA: A.D. 395

On 17 November 375, while hearing the speeches of envoys from the German Quadi at Brigetio on the Pannonian Danube, Valentinian I suffered an apoplectic fit and died. He was fifty-five years old and had been emperor for twelve years. At the beginning of his reign he had appointed his younger brother Valens as Augustus in the East, largely as the result of army pressure. In 367, when a serious illness caused speculation over the succession, he nominated his eight-year-old son Gratian as Augustus. When Valentinian died Gratian was sixteen and immediately assumed power in the West from a residence at Trier. In Illyricum, however, the army commander (*magister militum*) Merobaudes arranged for the proclamation of the late emperor's younger son Valentinian as Augustus on 22 November. While his father was active in Pannonia this infant had been living with his mother Justina at a villa called Murocincta, which lay one hundred miles from Brigetio. It was there that the army hailed him as their emperor. Fears that Gratian might object proved groundless, and he seems to have accepted readily an elevation which appeared to rule out the appearance of any usurper in Illyricum.¹³

Valentinian I had been active on both the Rhine and the Danube frontiers. In 374–375 an unsuccessful attempt to construct a military base in the lands of the Quadi beyond the Danube led to an invasion of Pannonia. This was repulsed by the general Theodosius, who later became emperor. Valentinian himself moved from Trier to the Danube in 375; in August of that year he was issuing laws from Carnuntum.¹⁴ As had happened before, the emperor became very unpopular among the wealthy through his demands for additional taxation, which he needed for the construction of new fortifications along the frontiers. Examples of these are known along the south bank of the Danube in the bend between Esztergom and Aquincum.¹⁵ The first action of the high command after

¹²*CIL* 3. 10236 (Sirmium).

¹³*Amm. Marc.* 30. 6, 1 ff. 10, 1–6.

¹⁴*Cod. Theod.* 9, 1, 2. Dated 12 August 375.

¹⁵*Amm. Marc.* 30. 5, 1–7. Rebuilding under Valentinian I is attested in a number of Pannonian fortresses, Carnuntum (*CIL* 3. 14358/11), the *Castra* at Esztergom (3. 10596),

the death of Valentinian I was to destroy the bridge across the Danube at Aquincum, while a column of troops operating across the river under Merobaudes was recalled. For the next few years, until about 378, the young Valentinian II resided alone at Sirmium, and during this period Pannonia does not appear to have suffered any major incursion of peoples from across the Danube. It was along the lower Danube, especially the long exposed stretch below the Iron Gates, that a serious crisis was developing through the demands of the Goths to be allowed to settle within the Empire. Late in 377 it is reported that troops were being transferred from Pannonia to assist Valens on the lower Danube.¹⁶ In 378 Gratian arrived in Illyricum. On the 9th August of that year a disastrous battle with the Goths at Adrianople had ended the reign of his uncle Valens, and on the 19 January 379 Gratian proclaimed Theodosius as Augustus.¹⁷ After visiting at least one military station, Tricciana (Ságvár, southeast of Lake Balaton), by the beginning of the summer Gratian had moved to Aquileia.¹⁸ In June of the same year Theodosius moved southeastwards to Thessalonica. Earlier Pannonia had suffered an invasion to which the Romans replied with an expedition across the Danube under Maiorianus.¹⁹ At the end of 379 Pannonia suffered a serious invasion from the southeast. Out of the chaos along the lower Danube caused by the disaster of Adrianople part of the Goths, under the leadership of Alatheus and Saphrac, entered and occupied southeast Pannonia. The *comes* Vitalianus, who had been appointed to Illyricum by Gratian, was unable to resist. It is possible that some Huns, who may have entered the Hungarian plain around this period, were included among the invaders.²⁰ Little is known of events in Pannonia between the invasion in 379 and the death of Theodosius I on 17 January 395, the year in which our Pannonian lady was born. As a result of the invasion, Gratian appeared at Sirmium late in the summer of 380, and proceeded to settle the peoples of Alatheus and Saphrac, presumably on lands in the province which they had already occupied.²¹ In 382 Gratian was in

and the new system of *burgi* along the Danube around the bend between Esztergom and Aquincum (*CIL* 3. 3653 at Esztergom), and at Visegrad, S. Soproni, *Limes-Romanus-Konferenz-Nitra* (Bratislava 1959) 134 f.

¹⁶Amm. Marc. 31. 7, 3.

¹⁷Amm. Marc. 31. 12-13.

¹⁸*Cod. Theod.* 11. 36, 26. Dated 5 April 379. On the location of Tricciana see A. Radnóti *RE* 7A. 82 f.

¹⁹Sidon. Apoll. 5.107 ff.

²⁰Zosimus 4. 34. Jordanes, *Getica* 139-142. Amm. Marc. 25. 10, 9. Pan. Pacat. 32, 4 (ed. R. A. B. Mynors p. 107). Cf. Amm. Marc. 31. 16, 7: *exinde digressi sunt (Gothi) effusorie per arctas provincias, quas peragrare licenter ad usque radices, Alpium Iuliarum, quas Venetas appellabat antiquitas*. On the probable arrival of the Huns at this time see the literature cited by A. Mócsy, *RE* suppl. 9 (1962) col. 577.

²¹Jordanes, *loc. cit.*; Pan. Pacat. *loc. cit.* (above, n. 20).

Pannonia once more, travelling from northern Italy to Viminacium (Kostolac) and back. Nothing is known of the purpose or the results of this journey. In 385 there was some danger, probably a threat of invasion from the Sarmatians, but no details are recorded. In 387–388 Pannonia was involved in the civil war between Magnus Maximus and Theodosius. The former occupied Siscia, and assumed control over the mint, but after a defeat from Theodosius the usurpation collapsed at Poetovio. Maximus retreated to Italy and died. In a panegyric of Valentinian II delivered shortly after his death in 392 Ambrosius mentions that Sarmatians had penetrated Pannonia as far as the border of Italy, but that the emperor drove them back and took some of them prisoner.²² It is not easy to discover the condition of Pannonia in the years between the invasion of Alatheus and Saphrac from the southeast and the great invasion by Goths and Alani from across the Danube in 395. Generally the circulation of coinage seems to have continued without any interruption, and the only major centre which we know to have been destroyed during these years was Mursa (Osijek), which lay at a very exposed point near the confluence of the Theiss and the Danube.²³ One source with first-hand knowledge of the area is St. Jerome, who was born at Stridon, close to the border of Pannonia and Dalmatia. In his works there are a number of references to the devastation suffered by his homeland,²⁴ and his own birthplace, which had sent a bishop to the Nicaea council in 324, was destroyed. On the other hand, it seems far from certain that this picture is typical of the Pannonian provinces in the years 378–395. The last emperor to reside at Sirmium was the young Valentinian II, while the last to travel the great military route through Illyricum to the East was Theodosius I in 394. It is certainly difficult to imagine what lies behind the remark of Ambrosius in 392 that it was feasible to export corn from Pannonia to Italy, although the dedication to the ex-governor Valerius Dalmatius indicates that wealthy landowners were residing on and enjoying the fruits of their estates in the early 390's, even in such an apparently

²²*Cod. Theod.* 1, 10, 1; 12, 1, 89. Symmach. *Rel.* 47 (*MGH AA* 6 p. 315), recording that Sarmatian prisoners were made to fight gladiators in the Rome arena. Claudian. *Pan. III cons. Hon.* 147 ff. Ambrosius, *de obitu Valentiniani* 2, 4, 22.

²³*Collectio Avellina* 39, 4 (*CSEL* 35 p. 89).

²⁴Jerome, *Comm. in Sophonianam Prophetam* (ed. M. Adriaen, *Corpus Christianorum ser. lat.* 76A p. 658): *Iram quippe Domini etiam bruta sentiunt animalia, et vastatis urbibus hominibusque interfectis, solitudinem et raritatem bestiarum quoque fieri, et volatiliū pisciumque, testis Illyricum est, testis Thracia, testis in quo ortus sum, solum, ubi praeter caelum et terram vepres, et condensa silvarum, cuncta perierunt.* Written 392 or early 393. *Epistulae* 66, 14 (ed. I. Hilberg, *CSEL* 54. 665): *Unde, quia paene nobis illud de evangelio contigit, ut futurae turris non ante computaremus impensas, compulsi sumus fratrem Paulinianum ad patriam mittere, ut semirutas villulas, quae barbarorum effugerunt manus, et parentum communium cineres venderet, ne coeptum sanctorum ministerium deserentes risum maledicis et aemulis praebeamus.*

exposed area as the rich farmland of southeast Pannonia west of Mursa.²⁵

In 395 Pannonia suffered invasion from across the Danube on a scale much greater than anything which had occurred earlier, with results which were correspondingly more widespread and enduring. It seems clear that as an administered province of the empire Pannonia ceased to exist at this time. The old legionary fortress of Vindobona (Vienna) in the northwest was destroyed by fire, while a few miles lower down the Danube at Carnuntum the small amount of coinage minted after 395 suggests a drastic drop in activity. Out of a grand total of 12,500 coins less than 100 were minted after this date. In the south the mint at Siscia had ceased to exist, while the fate of Sirmium is unknown.²⁶ In the years following 395 it is clear that large groups of invaders could move to and fro across the old province without there being any question of Roman forces hindering or even supervising their progress. Late in 401 Alaric and his Visigoths advanced from the area of Sirmium into Italy to fight the imperial forces under the command of Stilicho, which hardly suggests that any Roman military organisation existed to the northeast of Italy. Even before the march of Alaric, the Vandals were not hindered from marching westwards along the northern fringes of Pannonia. Disturbed probably by the same upheavals which caused the great invasion under Radagaisus in 405, the Vandals moved west across the territory of the Sarmatae around the middle and upper Theiss, and crossed the Danube into Roman territory around Aquincum. From there they moved through Brigetio and Carnuntum to reach Raetia, and in 402 they moved into Gaul. During their passage through Roman territory they may have attracted some of the Alani settled in Pannonia by Gratian nearly a generation before.²⁷

²⁵Ambrosius, *Epp.* 18. 21 (Migne *PL* 16 col. 1019 f.): *De Gallis quid loquar solito ditioribus? Frumentum Pannoniae, quod non severant, vendiderunt; et Secunda Rhetia fertilitatis suae novit invidiam.* During this time the great Nicomachus Flavianus, praetorian prefect, spent some time at Sirmium, Symmachus, *Epp.* 2. 17–19, while the bishop Amantius remained in his bishopric at Iovia, east of Poetovio (Ptuj) on the river Drave, R. Egger, *JOAI* 21–22 (1922–1924) Bb. 372 ff. On Valerius Dalmatius see Th. Mommsen, *Gesammelte Schriften* 2. 150 ff., and for the date H. Nesselhauf, “Die spätrömische Verwaltung der gallisch-germanische Länder,” *Abh. Akad. Berlin*. 1938, 22, assigning him to 387–394. The bronze plaque, which was found at Beremend-Idamajor (distr. Baramja) is illustrated in E. B. Thomas, *Römische Villen in Pannonia* (Budapest 1964) plate 170; cf. p. 271 ff.

²⁶Vindobona: E. Polaschek, *Mitt. Ver. f. Gesch. d. Stadt Wien* 15 (1935) 11, cited by A. Mócsy, *RE* suppl. 9. (1962) col. 579 f. Carnuntum: E. Swoboda, *Carnuntum*,⁴ 80. On the policy of Stilicho towards Illyricum and his relations with Alaric in the years 395–405 see now Alan Cameron, *Claudian* (Oxford 1970) 59–62, 85 f., 156 ff.

²⁷It is true that some passages in Claudian's poems composed after this date indicate that some form of organisation survived in Pannonia, for example *Fesc.* 4. 14 f. and *Epith. Palladii* 88, but such statements can hardly be taken at face value. Jordanes, *Getica* 147, describes how late in 401 Alaric passed through a Pannonia which was devoid of any Roman troops, and there is no mention of troops from Pannonia when

In 405 a large force of Ostrogoths, along with Huns and other Goths, under the leadership of Radagaisus passed through Pannonia into Italy. From laws issued by Honorius at Ravenna it is clear that this particular invasion caused great distress to the provincials, and many were forced to flee from their homes. Some of those whose plight is described, and for whom the government attempted to guarantee fair treatment in the more fortunate areas of the Empire whither they had fled, will have come from Pannonia.²⁸ In 402 Alaric had taken over the province Savia, while his brother-in-law Athaulf had secured Pannonia Prima by 405. What was left of Roman Pannonia after Alaric and Athaulf left for Italy in 408 is not known. Any worthwhile government institution had doubtless long been removed, as happened with the imperial textile factory (*gynaecium*) at Bassianae near Sirmium. In the *Notitia Dignitatum* it appears as having been transferred to the shelter of Salona on the Adriatic.²⁹ Technically Pannonia Secunda and Savia were still part of the western Empire, although under the year 427 the Constantinople chronicler Marcellinus records that they were recovered "after being occupied by the Huns for fifty years." Not long after this Pannonia became part of the domain of Attila. Nearly a century later Justinian recalls in one of his laws how the praetorian prefect Apraemius was forced to flee from Sirmium to Thessalonica. Attila died in 453 and, in the confusion which followed, an expedition in 455 may have recovered some parts of western Pannonia for the West, including Savaria where record of an earthquake was made on 10 September 455.³⁰ In the same year, however, the Ostrogoths were already entering Pannonia from the east.

Claudian is cataloguing the forces which are to be summoned in order to defend Italy from Alaric, *Bell. Goth.* 414 ff. The same poem contains references to major incursions and settlements in the Danubian provinces belonging to the West, 278 f., 363 ff., 380 f., 414 f. On the movements of the Vandals see L. Schmid, *Geschichte der Wandalen* (München 1942) 13 ff., also Chr. Courtois, *Les Vandales en Afrique* (Paris 1955) 38 ff. Procopius preserves the tradition that hunger was the main reason for their trek westwards, *Bell. Vand.* 1. 22, 3. Alani once settled in Pannonia may be the 'hostes Pannonii' mentioned with great grief by Jerome in a letter, *Epp.* 123. 15, *CSEL* 56. p. 92.

²⁸Radagaisus: Orosius, *Hist.* 7. 37. Jordanes, *Rom.* 321 f. Refugees: *Cod. Theod.* 5. 7, 2: *Diversarum homines provinciarum cuiuslibet sexus condicionis aetatis, quos barbarica feritas captiva necessitate transduxerat, invitos nemo retineat, sed ad propria redire cupientibus libera sit facultas*, and 10. 10, 25 (issued 10 Dec. 408): *Cum per Illyrici partes barbaricus speraretur incursus numerosa incolarum manus sedes quaesivit externas*, and a later reference to Illyriciani, doubtless people from Pannonia.

²⁹*Notitia Dignitatum*, Occ. 11. 46. Note, however, the SM mint which struck coins in the years 410–420, which could be Siscia, J. P. C. Kent, "Coin evidence for the abandonment of a frontier province," *Carnuntina* (ed. E. Swoboda, Graz 1956) 89 f. Otherwise the circulation of coins in Pannonia seems to have come to an end quite suddenly after 395, see A. Alföldi, *Der Untergang der Römerherrschaft in Pannonien* 2 (Berlin 1926) 58.

³⁰Marcellinus, *Chron. Min.* 2 p. 76: *Pannoniae quae per L annos ab Hunnis retinebantur a Romanis receptae sunt*. As it stands the statement is an error, but most probably it

III. SALONA AND THE INSTALLATION OF VALENTINIAN III: A.D. 425

On the division of the Empire into two parts after the death of Theodosius I in 395 Salona, along with the rest of Dalmatia, formed part of the West, ruled from Ravenna by the ineffectual Honorius. He died there in August 423 and during the two years which followed Salona was to be involved directly in the high politics of empire, the base from which the eastern emperor Theodosius II was to establish an infant cousin on the western throne as Valentinian III. The events of these two years are described in the writings of contemporary (Socrates, Philostorgius), or near contemporary (Olympiodorus), historians, supplemented by the chroniclers who wrote later in the fifth century (Prospero of Aquitaine) or in the sixth (Cassiodorus).³¹

For a few months in 421 Honorius had shared his throne with Constantius III who was not, however, accepted as emperor in Constantinople. From his marriage to Honorius' half-sister Placidia were born Honoria and Valentinian. Since his uncle Honorius died childless this infant had the strongest claim to succeed in the West, and this was strenuously supported by his mother. In 414 this remarkable lady had married the Visigothic king Athaulf, but after the death of her next husband Constantius the position of Placidia and her young family at the Ravenna court became precarious. Her principal opponent was the army commander (*magister militum*) Castinus who had hoped to exercise power in the West after the manner of Stilicho and Constantius. However it appears that it was Placidia's own faction, supported by Goths who remembered her as their queen, which provoked the breach with Honorius and led to fighting in the streets at Ravenna. A few months before the death of Honorius in 423 Placidia was banished and fled to Constantinople. The chronicle of Cassiodorus records that she had been suspected of intriguing with an enemy—presumably the Visigoths.³² Our sources do not make clear the precise order of events which followed the death of Honorius on 15 August 423. Placidia and her children had

reflects the memory of the great disaster of the East suffered at Adrianople in 378 and the ensuing chaos on the lower Danube. Flight of praetorian prefect: Just. Nov. 11 (issued in 535): *Cum enim in antiquis temporibus Sirmii praefectura fuerat constituta, ibique omne fuerat Illyrici fastigium tam in civilibus quam in episcopalibus causis, postea autem Attilanis temporibus eiusdem locis devastatis Apraemius praefectus praetorio de Sirmitana civitate in Thessalonicam profugus venerat.* Earthquake at Savaria: Chron. Min. 1 p. 304; cf. Sidon. Apoll. Carm. 7 Paneg. Avitum, 588 ff., delivered in 456.

³¹The best modern accounts are in J. B. Bury, *History of the Later Roman Empire* 1 (London 1923) 221–225, and O. Seeck, *Geschichte des Untergangs der antiken Welt* 6 (Stuttgart 1920) 90–97 and notes pp. 407–410.

³²Cassiodorus Chron. sub a. 423 (MGH Chron. Min. 2 p. 155), cf. Prospero of Aquitaine sub a. 423 (MGH Chron. Min. 1 p. 470).

already reached Constantinople when the news arrived. Socrates tells how Theodosius kept the news secret by issuing ambiguous statements: only when he had dispatched a force to Salona to check on any movements in the West did he formally announce the news.³³ Since Theodosius was far away from his capital at Eudoxiopolis in Pisidia during the first half of August 423 it may have been Placidia herself who issued instructions for the seizure of Salona.³⁴ This was perhaps not the first occasion since the division of the Empire that Salona had come under the East. The tombstones of two imperial officials (a *cornicularius* and a *domesticus*) who died at Salona in December 414 and November 415 are dated by eastern consuls only, one of whom was never promulgated in the West.³⁵ It is possible that Theodosius II, now the sole legal emperor, may have entertained the notion of emulating his grandfather by ruling the whole Empire, and there would have been no difficulty in suppressing the claims of the five-year-old Valentinian by detaining him and his family indefinitely at Constantinople.³⁶ In the event Placidia seems to have secured a bargain to the effect that if Valentinian was established in Italy then Dalmatia and Pannonia (whatever was left of it) would be ceded to the East, and also that Valentinian should marry Theodosius' infant daughter Licinia Eudoxia. Although the transfer of territory was formally arranged twelve years later when the marriage took place (29 October 437), it seems clear that it was Theodosius' share of the bargain made in 423–424.³⁷ However, while these plans were being made in Constantinople, a usurper arose in Italy, ensuring that a military expedition would be required to establish Valentinian in the West. His opponent was a certain John, who had held the civilian post of chief of the Palace clerks (*pri-*

³³Socrates, *Hist. Eccl.* 7. 23.

³⁴On the 8 and 9 August 423 Theodosius was issuing laws at Eudoxiopolis in Pisidia, *Cod. Theod.* 16. 5, 61; 12. 3. 2. O. Seeck, *op. cit.* (above, n. 31), p. 88 and 407, suggests that it was Placidia who took the initiative in the matter.

³⁵*CIL* 3. 9513 (Manastirine cemetery): *Depositio Fl. Thalassi ex corniculario die X kal. Ianuar. post cons(ulatum) Luci v.c.* Lucius was consul at Constantinople for the entire year 413, but was not promulgated in the West. The stone is dated to 23 December in the year after his consulship (414), although Flavius Constantius (later Constantius III) was promulgated as consul in the West. *CIL* 3. 2656 (at Split): *Deposio Leonis ex domestico d. VIII kal. Decem. D. N. Theodosio perpetuo VI Aug. cos.*, dated 23 November 415 by the sixth consulship of Theodosius in the East, but omitting the tenth of Honorius in the West. Mommsen, *CIL* 3 ad loc., suggested that if VI was a mason's error for IV, then the date would be 411, when Theodosius was sole consul for the year; cf. J. Jung, *Römer und Romanen in die Donauländer* (2nd edition, Innsbruck 1887) 186 f. note 2.

³⁶As sole emperor Theodosius issued laws for the Empire, for example *Cod. Theod.* 11. 20, 5, on 13 May 424, referring to the late Honorius as *patruus meus*.

³⁷Socrates records some uncertainty on the part of Theodosius, *Hist. Eccl.* 7. 23. The formal transfer is recorded for 437 by Cassiodorus, *Variae* 11. 1. 9, and Jordanes, *Rom.* 329. The province was administered by a praetorian prefect at Sirmium until he was forced to retreat to Thessalonica, see note 30 above.

micerius notariorum), an important office which controlled the letters of appointment to all senior imperial officials.³⁸ Although he was proclaimed Augustus at Ravenna, Procopius reproduces a source which told that he was chosen by members of the imperial court at Rome.³⁹ He appears to have enjoyed the support of Placidia's enemy Castinus, to judge from the latter's designation to the consulship in 424.⁴⁰ Procopius gives a favourable report of his reign, with special praise for his high standards in government. He may have been responsible for the restrictions placed on the numerous privileges and immunities granted to the clergy by past emperors, which were cancelled immediately in laws which Placidia issued from Aquileia (July 425) immediately after her victory over John.⁴¹

John's first action was to send an embassy to Constantinople to seek recognition from Theodosius, but the very appearance of the ambassadors was treated as an act of contumacy and they were sent off to exile at various places on the Propontis.⁴² At the same time, if in fact it had not been done already, Placidia was awarded the title *Augusta* and her son became *nobilissimus*, titles which Theodosius had refused to acknowledge when conferred a few years before during the brief reign of Constantius III. Furthermore, that ruler now received posthumous recognition in the East.⁴³ During 424 Theodosius assembled the force which was to restore Valentinian in the West. Its leader was to be Ardaburius, a field commander who was also an Arian, along with his son Aspar. Another commander was Candidianus who ten years before had secured the marriage of Placidia to the Visigothic king Athaulf at Narbo.⁴⁴ Placidia and her son accompanied the forces to Thessalonica where on the 23 October Valentinian was raised to the rank of Caesar by the *magister officiorum*

³⁸Renatus Frigiderius (in Gregory of Tours, 2. 8). On the office see A. H. M. Jones, *op. cit.* (above, n. 2) 337.

³⁹Procopius *Bell. Vand.* 1. 3. 5.

⁴⁰In 419 or 429 as *comes domesticorum* he had campaigned against the Franks, Renatus Frigiderius (in Gregory of Tours, 2. 9), and in 422 led an unsuccessful expedition against the Alani and Vandals in Spain, when he was betrayed by his Gothic allies, Renatus Frigiderius, *loc. cit.*

⁴¹Procopius *Bell. Vand.* 1. 3. 6-8. *Const. Sirmond.* 6.

⁴²The main sources for the usurpation of John are: Socrates, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 7. 23, Philostorgius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 12. 13, Olympiodorus frg. 46 (Müller, *FHG* 4. 68). The exile of John's ambassadors is noted only by Philostorgius.

⁴³Marcellinus *Chron.* sub a. (*Chron. Min.* 2 p 76), cf. Olympiodorus frg. 46, who indicates that this was the second occasion on which they assumed these titles (*ἐπαναλαμβάνει*). The legitimisation of Constantius III is reflected by laws issued in his name, along with Honorius and Theodosius, being accepted for the Theodosian Code, Mommsen, *Prolegomena* p. ccxcvii.

⁴⁴He is mentioned only by Olympiodorus, frg. 46, and in the marriage of Placidia and Athaulf, frg. 24, Orosius, *Hist.* 7. 40, 2; 43, 2.

Helion.⁴⁵ He was also designated consul for the following year, in which he was styled Flavius Placidus Valentinianus Caesar. The expedition then moved to Salona, from which the attack on John could be mounted. Philostorgius records that Ardaburius and Aspar had to take the city by force (about November-December 424) which suggests that Theodosius' (or Placidia's) seizure of the city after the death of Honorius had been neutralised by John, perhaps with the help of local elements. After this second occupation there probably took place the comprehensive rebuilding of the Salona defences which is recorded on an inscription discovered near the *porta Caesarea*.⁴⁶ Work of this kind may have been regarded as suitable employment for the imperial forces during the winter 424/5 while the Adriatic was too hazardous for sailing. When spring arrived the expedition moved against John at Ravenna but nearly suffered complete disaster. Ardaburius sailed with a force straight across the Adriatic to Italy, while Aspar led a more mobile force of lightly equipped cavalry overland to Aquileia through Istria.⁴⁷ Ardaburius was captured along with two of his ships after his force had become scattered. John treated him with great consideration, placing him in open arrest at Ravenna. He judged that there was still some chance of a settlement with Theodosius, which would certainly be decreased if he executed an imperial field commander. The responsibility for the success of the expedition now fell on Aspar. Placidia and Valentinian may have sailed with the ill-fated force of Ardaburius, but they managed to return to Salona, an escape which may be commemorated by Placidia and her family with a mosaic text in the church of St. John the Evangelist at Ravenna: *liberationis periculum maris votum solvent*.⁴⁸ It is possible that they travelled with Aspar, who now pressed on and established himself at Aquileia without meeting any opposition. However, John's generosity towards Ardaburius proved ill-judged. He intrigued among the senior officers in John's army, who may have resented rule by a civilian official, and eventually succeeded in sending a letter to his son at Aquileia telling him to advance and take the victory he had already guaranteed. Aspar, assisted by Candidianus, moved south and crossed the normally impenetrable marshes around Ravenna with the help of a local shepherd. He brushed aside John's

⁴⁵On the date see O. Seeck, *op. cit.* (above, n. 31), p. 409 note 93, 4.

⁴⁶*CIL* 3. 1984: *Salvis DD NN Theod[osio] . . . muros] cunctasque turre[s . . .] res munimeni civitat[is] necessarias . . .] agens VIC iminentiu[m] virorum praefectorum praetorio . . .] quae LAB[. . .]* It could possibly date to the period of Theodosius and Arcadius (383-393), cf. Mommsen, *CIL* 3 ad loc.

⁴⁷Socrates does not mention the separate force sent to Aquileia, but he does record that Ardaburius was captured because of bad weather.

⁴⁸*CIL* 11. 276 = *ILS* 818.

forces and sent the usurper to Placidia at Aquileia, who exhibited him on an ass in the circus and executed him.⁴⁹

John's strategy of defence was seriously impaired by his weakness in Italy. He was not recognised in Rome⁵⁰ nor does he appear to have received any assistance from Castinus, whom he had appointed consul for 424. Africa, which influenced loyalties at Rome through the corn supply, was controlled by Bonifatius, an ambitious *comes* who had once refused to help Castinus in a Spanish campaign against the Vandals in 422.⁵¹ Bonifatius played no direct part in the overthrow of John, although once he had supported Placidia with money when she was driven from the Ravenna court.⁵² John's main hope for success was centered on Aetius. He had accepted John as emperor and had been appointed to the *cura palatii*, an administrative post in the *comitatus* which carried the rank of tribune.⁵³ Since he had close links with the Huns, Aetius was dispatched to Pannonia to secure more reliable forces, and he entered Italy with a formidable army of 60,000 only three days after the execution of John at Ravenna. He challenged Aspar and they fought an indecisive battle with heavy casualties on both sides. At this point Placidia intervened: Aetius would receive the rank of *comes*, while he would persuade his forces to return to their homes with gifts of money in exchange for hostages.⁵⁴ Castinus, who may have been the person responsible for Placidia and her family being exiled from Ravenna, was now in his turn sent into exile.⁵⁵

Placidia and her family moved to Rome where the formal coronation of Valentinian was to take place. It seems that Theodosius II intended to travel to the West and conduct the ceremony himself and to persuade people not to give their support in future to usurpers such as John. Unfortunately he fell ill at Thessalonica and the coronation had to be

⁴⁹Olympiodorus, frg. 46, notes that Aspar's success was owed to operations conducted by Canditianus against cities in John's power. Details of the latter's execution are furnished by Procopius, *Bell. Vand.* 1. 3, 9. His reign probably lasted from the end of 423 until the victory of Placidia in May 425, Seeck, *op. cit.* (above, n. 31), p. 408 note 11. He rejects the implication in Socrates, 7. 23 (ἐν τούτῳ) that John had seized power before the news of Honorius' death was officially proclaimed in the East.

⁵⁰This may be deduced from a dedication to Valentinian as Caesar by the *praefectus urbi* Faustus in 425, *CIL* 6. 1677 = *ILS* 805; cf. Bury, *op. cit.* (above, n. 31), 223 note 1.

⁵¹Seeck, *op. cit.* (above, n. 31), 6. 90.

⁵²Olympiodorus frg. 40.

⁵³On the office see A. H. M. Jones, *op. cit.* (above, n. 2), 372.

⁵⁴Philostorgius 14, Prospero sub a. 425 (*Chron. Min.* 1 p. 470 f.). This marked the beginning of Aetius' great career as general of the Roman West under Valentinian III.

⁵⁵Prospero, *loc. cit.* (see n. 54). There is no indication, apart from his hostility towards Placidia and the Goths, and his consulship in 424, of the extent to which he gave support to John.

conducted by Helion, exactly a year after the earlier ceremony at Thessalonica (23 October 425).⁵⁶

Ardaburius was rewarded with the consulship in 427 and his son Aspar was to receive the same honour in 434.⁵⁷

IV. FROM PANNONIA TO SALONA

A new reading of a Salona epitaph has yielded an upper class lady from Pannonia, born in 395, who died at Salona on the Adriatic thirty years later, survived by her husband and two children. It is both curious and sad that not one of the four known members of this family is identified by name. The discovery has prompted digressions on Pannonia in the year of her birth and on Salona at the time that she died. The two situations appear in striking contrast and reflect the astonishing rapidity with which the fabric of empire in the West crumbled away in the last decades of the fourth and the first decades of the fifth centuries. The year of her birth witnessed the end of organised provincial control over much of Roman Pannonia. It seems improbable that the wealthy will have remained in areas so harassed by invasions, and the newborn infant may even have left her homeland at this time, perhaps a large estate with a comfortable residence on the scale enjoyed by Valerius Dalmatius not far from Mursa. If her family had managed to obtain a refuge in Italy or Dalmatia they may yet have looked to such as Stilicho to lead Roman forces back and recover their lands. Such hopes soon faded as effective military power in the West disappeared. It is not known whom she married (he had been her guardian—perhaps after her parents had died) and how she came to Salona. In the year or so before she died she will have witnessed the death of Honorius and the usurpation of John at Ravenna. If she was living at Salona she will have gazed upon, and even perhaps become a part of, the entourage of Placidia and the little emperor Valentinian, probably lodged in the staterooms of Diocletian's seaside villa while awaiting the removal of John. The ancient colony of Salona will certainly have been impressed, and no doubt severely taxed, by the disciplined troops under the able generals Ardaburius and Aspar, emphasising the power and cohesion of the East. Already the two halves of the Empire were drifting apart and Salona, inevitably close to the point

⁵⁶A fragmentary verse inscription at Sitifis in Mauretania appears to commemorate the coronation of Valentinian III in Rome (as restored by de Rossi), *CIL* 8. 8481 = *ILS* 802.

⁵⁷Although Arians they both served Theodosius II well. A silver-gilt disc now in Munich, found in the territory of Cosa near Florence, commemorates Aspar presiding over his consular games: *Fl(avius) Ardabur Aspar vir inlustris com(es) et mag(ister) militum et consul ordinarius* (*CIL* 11. 2637 = 1299).

of fracture, was soon to be taken once more by the East, as Roman control in western Illyricum became restricted to the coast and the immediate hinterland. The struggle for power in 425 was brief. Salona became once more a military base for operations in Italy mounted from the east, now that the overland route had been cut and imperial forces could not pass from Sirmium and Serdica to Italy via the Save valley. It was a return to the situation under Marcus Aurelius in 170 when German invaders had for a period severed that jugular vein of the northern frontier; and, even earlier, to the situation which existed before Tiberius' operations in the *Bellum Pannonicum* of 12-9 B.C., when Salona and the Dalmatian coast had witnessed episodes in the civil war between Caesar and Pompeius. In 425 the military situation was similar, but on this occasion victory went to the eastern power. In Caesar's time the danger to Italy from the northeast was realised, even perhaps exaggerated, in the "war scare" caused at Rome by fears of the Dacians recently raised to a peak of power by Burebista. Now Pannonia lay outside the scene of events, except when John sent Aetius to obtain help from the Huns who had settled there.

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM