

Principes cum Tyrannis: Two Studies on the Kaisergeschichte and Its Tradition



R. W. Burgess

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PRINCIPES CUM TYRANNIS: TWO STUDIES ON THE KAISERGESCHICHTE AND ITS TRADITION

The *Kaisergeschichte* (*KG*) was a set of short imperial biographies extending from Augustus to the death of Constantine, probably written between 337 and c. 340. It no longer exists but its existence can be deduced from other surviving works. Amongst the histories of the fourth century – Aurelius Victor, Eutropius, Festus, Jerome's *Chronici canones*, the *Historia Augusta*, the *Epitome de Caesaribus*, and, in places, even Ammianus Marcellinus and perhaps the *Origo Constantini imperatoris* (*Anonymi Valesiani pars prior*) – there is a common selection of facts and errors, and common wording and phrasing in their narratives between Augustus and the death of Constantine, especially in their accounts of the third century. A natural assumption is that later historians copied earlier ones, yet later historians include information not contained in earlier ones, and historians who could not have known each other's work share similarities. For example, it looks as though Aurelius Victor was copying Eutropius, yet Victor wrote before Eutropius, and Eutropius contains information not in Victor and does not reproduce Victor's peculiar style or personal biases, things which he could hardly have avoided. Therefore Eutropius cannot be copying Victor. Since neither could have copied the other, there must therefore have been a common source. In his *Chronici canones* Jerome appears at first to be simply copying Eutropius. Yet when he deviates from Eutropius, his deviations usually mirror other histories, such as Suetonius, Victor, Festus, even the *Epitome* and the *Historia Augusta*, two works that had not even been written when Jerome compiled his chronicle and that did not use, and would never have used, the Christian chronicle as a source. Jerome was hurriedly dictating to his secretary, he had no time to peruse four or five works at a time for his brief notices. There must have been a single source that contained both the Eutropean material and the deviations common to Jerome and the other works. That source was the *KG*.¹ It is the purpose of this paper to add to the above list of authors who relied upon the *KG* two other writers whose work can be shown to have derived, either at first hand or later, from the *KG*: Polemius Silvius and Ausonius.

¹ The bibliography for the *KG* is large; the reader is directed to Reinhart Herzog and P. L. Schmidt (eds.), *Handbuch der Lateinischen Literatur* (Munich, 1989), pp. 196–8, §536: 'Die sogenannte Enmannsche Kaisergeschichte'. I shall cite here only the following: Alexander Enmann, 'Eine verlorene Geschichte der römischen Kaiser und das Buch De viris illustribus urbis Romae', *Philologus* Suppl. 4 (1884), 337–501; T. D. Barnes, 'The Lost Kaisergeschichte and the Latin Historical Tradition', *Bonner Historia-Augusta Colloquium 1968/1969. Antiquitas*, Reihe 4: Beiträge zur Historia-Augusta-Forschung, Band 7 (Bonn, 1970), 13–43 (reprinted in idem, *Early Christianity and the Roman Empire* (London, 1984), paper IV); idem, 'The *Epitome de Caesaribus* and its Sources', *CP* 71 (1976), 258–68 (reprinted in *Early Christianity and the Roman Empire*, paper XIII); idem, *The Sources of the Historia Augusta* (Brussels, 1978), pp. 90–97; R. W. Burgess, 'Jerome and the *Kaisergeschichte*', *Historia* (forthcoming); John Matthews, *The Roman Empire of Ammianus* (London, 1989), pp. 29–30, 244–5, 457; H. W. Bird, 'A Strange Aggregate of Errors for A.D. 193', *CB* 65 (1989), 95–8. Barnes denies any connection between the *KG* and the *Origo*: cf. *BHAC* (above), 24–7, and 'Jerome and the *Origo Constantini imperatoris*', *Phoenix* 43 (1989), 159–61. I hope to examine the obvious, but minor, connection between these two works in a future paper. For a terminal date of 357 for the *KG*, see H. W. Bird, 'Further Observations on the Dating of Enmann's *Kaisergeschichte*', *CQ* 23 (1973), 375–7.

1. THE LATERCULUS OF POLEMIUS SILVIUS AND THE *KG*

In late December of 448 and early January of 449 Polemius Silvius, a Gallic writer of great distinction, finished copying out a new 'modern' laterculus for Bishop Eucherius of Lyons. This laterculus consisted of monthly calendars, listing the festivals and holidays for every month, each followed by one of eleven short lists dealing with an amazing variety of subjects: emperors and usurpers; the provinces; animal names (divided over two months); a table for calculating the phases of the moon and Easter; the hills, buildings, and other structures of Rome; a list of fables; very short historical summary; animal sounds; weights and measures; poetic meters; and philosophical sects.² It was 'modern' because Polemius had gone through old laterculi and removed many of the difficult and outmoded (especially non-Christian) aspects, such as the pictures of the days, months, and astrological signs, the lunar letters, hebdomadals, nundinals, *dies Aegyptiaci*, and a number of pagan festivals.³ That such a document was primarily a didactic and practical tool, like a modern almanac, cannot be doubted.⁴

For the historian, it is the first section, which Polemius calls an 'enumeratio principum cum tyrannis', placed after the month of January, that is of the greatest interest, for it is a list of Roman emperors from Julius Caesar to Theodosius II and Valentinian III, excepting only Otho, Vitellius, and Trebonianus Gallus, who have been lost in transmission, either before Polemius' time or after.⁵ Emperor lists are a dime a dozen and that is probably why no one has paid any great attention to Polemius', but even a cursory glance will show that his list does what no other emperor list does: it includes usurpers. And not just a few usurpers, 63 of them between Claudius and Valentinian III. Where would Polemius, writing in Gaul in 448–9, have obtained such a detailed list of minor usurpers and rebels, especially for the third century? The answer to this is simple: he copied them, and the rest of his list, from an existing laterculus (or laterculi) and then added the most recent emperors and usurpers at the end.⁶ But what would have been the ultimate source?

One immediately thinks of the *Historia Augusta* (*HA*). It devotes entire *vitae* to usurpers such as Avidius Cassius, Pescennius Niger, and Clodius Albinus, and gives over two other *vitae* to collections of biographies about usurpers, the *Tyranni triginta* and the *Quadrigae tyrannorum*. Some of the usurpers listed by Polemius appear only in the *HA* among Latin sources. However, Polemius' list avoids all the false tyrants invented by the *HA* in the *Tyranni triginta*, omits others of its factual usurpers, and has accurate information about Zenobia and her family, about which the *HA* knows almost nothing. The *HA* cannot, therefore, be the source of Polemius' list. Verbal parallels with other works, discussed below, also rule out the *HA*.

Most of the usurpers are named in Suetonius, Tacitus, Aurelius Victor, Eutropius, Jerome, the *HA*, and the *Epitome de Caesaribus*. Unfortunately, no single surviving source contains all of the names, and some do not appear in any of the above seven (see the Appendix below). It is not easy to believe that someone, while compiling a document as simple as a laterculus, searched through seven different works (and

² The seven surviving sections were edited by Th. Mommsen in *Chronica minora* i. 518–551. The calendar itself is to be found in *Inscriptiones Italiae* 13.2, pp. 264–75.

³ For these terms, and the other changes Polemius made to the calendar, see his preface (*Chron. min.* i. 518–19) and Michele Renee Salzman, *On Roman Time* (Berkeley, 1990), pp. 242–4.

⁴ See Salzman, *op. cit.* (n. 3), p. 245.

⁵ *Chron. min.* i. 520–23. The text is rather corrupt now and Polemius' exemplar may have been as well.

⁶ Cf. his preface (p. 518). There is no way of knowing how old the list was from which he compiled his laterculus.

more) to gather the names of usurpers, which were hardly necessary or even useful. The most obvious hypothesis is that the names were readily available, as a whole, in a single source, probably the ultimate source of the emperor list itself. Given Polemius' concentration of usurpers in the third century, a virtual 'dark age' in Roman historiography, one suspects that that source must have been the *KG*, since it appears to have been the only detailed Latin source available for the third century.⁷ A comparison of the usurpers in Polemius and the *KG* – as revealed by Victor, Eutropius, Jerome, and the *Epitome* – discloses a strikingly close correspondence between the two works and strengthens the hypothesis that Polemius' list ultimately derived from the *KG* (see the Appendix below).

Apart from the common interest in usurpers and the common list of these pretenders in both the *KG* and Polemius' laterculus, there are a large number of verbal parallels between the two works, which is surprising, given how little there is in the laterculus apart from the names.⁸

At §8 Polemius says, 'Nero ..., cum ob scelera sua et dedecora ... a Romano populo ad poenam quaeritur, occidit.' Victor, Eutropius, and the *Epitome* (which is following Victor at this point) use the word 'dedecus' when describing Nero's corruptions (5.4, 7.14.2, 5.5), and Eutropius and Jerome use the clause 'cum quaereretur ad poenam' as a prelude to his flight and suicide (7.15.1, 185^b). At §13 Polemius says, 'Domitianus...qui primus Flavius nominatus dominum se dici iussit'. This is paralleled by Eutropius, Jerome, and Victor who state, 'Domitianus...dominum se et deum primus appellari iussit' (7.23.2, 190^b, and 11.2, the latter using 'dici'). In §29 Polemius calls Macrinus' son, Diadumenianus, 'Diadumenus', a name that only appears in Latin works that derive from the *KG* (Victor 22.1, Eutropius 8.21, *Epitome* 22.1, and *HA* *Diadumenus*).⁹ In §43 he says 'Valerianus captus a Persis apud eosdem defecit'. Eutropius reports, 'Valerianus...a Sapore, Persarum rege,...captus, apud Parthos consenuit' (9.7; = *Epitome* 32.5; cf. Victor 32.5: 'interiit'). In §45 Polemius describes a usurper as 'Marius ex fabro'. This corresponds to the description used of Marius by the *HA*: 'Marius ex fabro, ut dicitur, ferrario' (*Trig. tyr.* 8.1).¹⁰ In §49 Polemius states that Tetricus and his son 'se eidem dederunt' without explaining who the 'eidem' is. Victor says 'Tetricus...Aureliani per litteras praesidium implorauerat eique...se dedit' (35.4). In §52 Polemius reports that 'Probus...Gallis uineas habere permisit'.¹¹ Eutropius, Jerome, and the *Epitome* say 'Probus...uineas Gallos et Pannonios habere permisit' (9.17.2, 224^a, 37.3).¹² Polemius, being from Gaul, was only interested in Gallic grapes. In §63 Polemius says 'Dalmatius, frater illius de

⁷ This explains why so many fourth-century Latin authors all over the empire were forced to use it; cf. Barnes, *BHAC* (cit. n. 1), 41, and Ronald Syme, *Emperors and Biography* (Oxford, 1971), pp. 90, 195, and 231. It was used by Aurelius Victor in Sirmium, Eutropius and Festus in the East (?Constantinople or Marcianopolis), Jerome in Constantinople, and the *HA* (and Ammianus?) in Rome. As we shall see below, it may also have been used by Ausonius in Bordeaux.

⁸ Note also that three obscure Caesars listed by Polemius otherwise appear only in works deriving from the *KG* or in the *Origo* (which appears to be linked to the *KG*): Marcellus: PS 31; *Epit.* 23.4 (see n. 30, below); Valens: PS 62; *Epit.* 40.2.9; *Origo* 5.17–18; and Martinianus: PS 62; Victor 41.9; *Epit.* 41.6–7; *Origo* 5.26, 28–9. Compare also the *Origo*'s unusual 'Licinius Martinianum sibi Caesarem fecit' (5.26) with Polemius' 'Licinius...Martinianum et Valentem Caesares sibi fecerat' (62).

⁹ See Ronald Syme, *Historia Augusta Papers* (Oxford, 1983), pp. 48 and 49.

¹⁰ Both Victor and Eutropius (33.9 and 9.9.2) call Marius an 'opifex' (Victor adds 'ferri'). The *KG* therefore probably called him an 'opifex ex fabro ferrario'.

¹¹ The text is Mommsen's. The manuscript has 'haberi', which fits better with 'Gallis'; if 'habere' is accepted, 'Gallos' should probably be read.

¹² Victor and the *HA* mention it as well (37.3 and *Probus* 18.8) but with different wording.

matre alia, ...factus est rex regum <et> gentium Ponticarum'. This is an error, either of Polemius' source or of later manuscript tradition, for it was Hannibalianus who was made 'rex regum'; Dalmatius, who was Hannibalianus' brother and the son of Constantine's half-brother Dalmatius, was made Caesar.¹³ The *Origo Constantini imperatoris*, which is in a number of places closely related to the *KG* (see above, n. 1 and 8), reports the correct version, in the same order: 'Constantinus ... Dalmatium, filium fratris sui Dalmati, Caesarem fecit. Eius fratrem Annibalianum ... regem regum et Ponticarum gentium constituit' (6.35). Nowhere else does his exact title appear.

One result of the above comparisons is that the *KG* is shown to have been a work strangely interested in usurpers. This interest influenced Polemius Silvius and his predecessors, and probably the author of the *HA* as well, who, alone of known Roman historians, devoted great space to usurpers, long- and short-lived. This makes one suspect that usurpers were a part of the author's purpose in writing the *KG*, but what that purpose was is impossible to guess.

Such is the evidence in favour of the *KG* as the ultimate source of Polemius' list. I can find only two items that could not have derived from the *KG*: the existence of three Gordians (§§ 34 and 36) and the legitimacy of Aemilianus (42). The *KG* knew of only two Gordians.¹⁴ I suspect, however, that the entry on the two Gordians in Africa has been corrected by a later redactor of the list (much as the reference to Gallus and Julian mentioned in n. 13 was retroactively added to the entry on Constantine). The basis for this conclusion is that in the sole surviving manuscript the name appears only in the singular: 'sub quo duo Gorgianus in Africa tyranni fuerunt.'¹⁵ It looks as though someone added the 'duo' and changed the last two words to plurals but forgot about the name itself. It is impossible to know whether this change was made before or after Polemius, or indeed by Polemius himself. Probably at the same time Aemilianus was removed from the list of usurpers, amongst whom he was included by the *KG*, and established as a legitimate emperor.¹⁶ Given the number of times that Polemius' list must have been copied and recopied from the time it was first excerpted from the *KG*, it should come as no surprise that some errors have crept in or that some alterations have been made to it.¹⁷ Otherwise, nothing in the laterculus is inconsistent with its ultimate derivation from the *KG*, and its name should be added to the list of later Latin compilations that came to depend so heavily upon it for their accounts of the third century.

¹³ In his edition of the laterculus, Mommsen has supplied from the *Origo* an approximation of what has fallen out of the text. The sentence 'de quo nati sunt Gallus et Iulianus qui imperavit' was added to the basic entry some time after 360, of course, but it is incorrect, for Gallus and Julian were half-brothers by Julius Constantius, half-brother of Constantine, and brother of Dalmatius, père.

¹⁴ Victor 26–7, Eutropius 9.2.1; cf. *HA Gord. tres* 2.1 (attacking both the *KG* and Victor) and *Epit.* 26–7.

¹⁵ See Mommsen's *apparatus criticus*, bottom of p. 521 at line 34.

¹⁶ Victor 31.1–3, Eutropius 9.5–6, Jerome 219^f, *Epit.* 31.1–3. It should be noted that a Latin tradition independent of the *KG*, represented by the *Chronica urbis Romae* (compiled c. 325; ed. Mommsen, *Chron. min.* i. 147–8; on which and the *KG*, see Barnes, *BHAC* (cit. n. 1), 23–4), includes both three Gordians and Aemilianus as a legitimate emperor. It would seem that Polemius' laterculus or its source was altered by someone with access to this tradition.

¹⁷ Among such errors or emendations I would include the dislocation of three usurpers: Cassius (under Pius instead of Marcus Aurelius; copying error), Victorinus (under Aurelian instead of Gallienus; erroneous emendation), and Julianus (under Numerian instead of Carinus; compilation error).

2. THE KG AND THE LOST HISTORY OF EUSEBIUS NANNETICUS

Amongst the surviving works of Ausonius there are the remains of two historical texts: the so-called *Fasti* and the *Caesares*. The former was originally a complete list of Roman consuls from 509 B.C. to A.D. 379 (382 in its second edition), but only four short introductory and explanatory poems now survive. The latter was originally a collection of poems treating the Roman emperors down to Ausonius' time (i.e. probably to Valentinian I, Valens, and Gratian, but perhaps ending with a laudatory mention of Valentinian II, Theodosius, and Arcadius). It begins with three poems listing the order of the first twelve emperors, the length of their reigns, and the manner of their deaths, all based on Suetonius. These are followed by quatrains on each emperor from Caesar to Elagabalus, where the manuscript tradition breaks off half-way through the last quatrain.¹⁸ In addition to these two works, we know from a list of the contents of the now-lost Verona manuscript of Ausonius, made by Giovanni Mansionario around 1320, that Ausonius wrote a number of other historical works that have not survived.¹⁹ These included a poem in hexameters on the kings who ruled in Italy between the Trojan War and the beginnings of Roman rule ('eodem genere metri [*i.e.* uersu heroico] de regibus qui regnauerunt in Ytalia inter Bellum Troianum et principium Romani imperii') and a chronicle from the beginning of the world to his own time ('cronicam ab initio mundi usque ad tempus suum').²⁰ For my purposes, however, the most interesting is the following notice: 'Item ad eundem [*i.e.* Hesperium filium suum] de imperatoribus res nouas molitis a Decio usque ad Dioclecianum uersu iambico trimetro iuxta libros Eusebii Nannetici ystorici' (hereafter referred to as the *Tyranni*). Eusebius of Nantes and his history are otherwise unknown. Is there anything that we can find out about them?

There is little we can say about Eusebius himself, except that he had a common Greek name (there are 42 in *PLRE* i) and came originally from the area around Portus Namnetum, modern Nantes, on the Loire.²¹ It is, however, Eusebius' history and Ausonius' use of it that better repay investigation.

The only discussions that I know of concerning the *Tyranni*, by M. D. Reeve and R. P. H. Green, make a fundamental mistake regarding the nature of Ausonius' work. Both believe that the *Tyranni* simply dealt with the emperors from Decius to

¹⁸ These are numbered 22 and 23 in the monumental new edition and commentary of R. P. H. Green (*The Works of Ausonius*, Oxford, 1991). However, Green is rather confused over the nature of the *Fasti*, thinking that it was written completely in verse and included accounts of the early kings of Rome and the emperors (p. 555). The evidence of the four surviving poems and the description of the work in Mansionario's list (see next note) – 'concordie libri fastorum cum libris consularibus liber unus' – indicates that it was an example of a genre that was becoming very popular at the time: annotated consular lists, like the *Consularia Constantinopolitana* (on which, see R. W. Burgess, *The Chronicle of Hydatius and the Consularia Constantinopolitana* (Oxford, 1993), pp. 175–209).

¹⁹ On this list, see R. Weiss, 'Ausonius in the Fourteenth Century' in R. R. Bolgar (ed.), *Classical Influences on European Culture A.D. 500–1500* (Cambridge, 1971), pp. 67–72; M. D. Reeve, 'Some Manuscripts of Ausonius', *Prometheus* 3 (1977), 112–20; and Green, *Ausonius*, p. 720.

²⁰ Green is incorrect in thinking that the chronicle referred to here was 'possibly based on Nepos' (*Ausonius*, p. 720). A chronicle that begins with the creation of the world is unlikely to derive from Nepos, or any other pagan historian. I think it far more probable that it was a chronicle inspired by and perhaps derived from that of Jerome, which became extremely popular in the West after its appearance in 382.

²¹ Green ('Marius Maximus and Ausonius' *Caesares*', *CQ* 31 (1981), 230, and *Ausonius*, p. 319) suggests that he may have been a distant relative of Ausonius' (= Eusebius 2, *PLRE* i. 301). It is not impossible; but see below.

Diocletian, somehow assuming that Ausonius treated them all as usurpers.²² Reeve thinks that it was a continuation of the *Caesares*; Green that it was part of the *Caesares*, in spite of the fact that the *Caesares* is in elegiac couplets and the *Tyranni* in iambic trimeters.²³ Thus in this hypothesis the *Tyranni* picked up where the *Caesares* originally left off, that is, with Philip. Neither Reeve nor Green explains what happened after Diocletian, since at the beginning of the *Caesares* Ausonius states that he listed all the emperors he knew ('percurram ordine cunctos/noui Romanae quos memor historiae').²⁴ These hypotheses need no refutation; no writer of late antiquity would have labelled all the emperors from Decius to Diocletian as usurpers. The phrase 'res novas molire' is not unusual and means generally 'to rebel' or 'revolt'²⁵ and specifically, especially with 'imperatores', 'to usurp imperial power'. In the sense of 'usurp' it is always used of unsuccessful claimants to the purple, not legitimate emperors (see below at n. 34).

The *Tyranni*, then, dealt with the usurpers between Decius and Diocletian. Therefore Eusebius' work must have been written at some point between c. 298/303, the defeat of the last usurpers of the reign of Diocletian, and the 380s, the likely date of composition for Ausonius' poem.²⁶ So much for its date; what of its size?

Mansionario (and therefore probably Ausonius) says 'iuxta libros'; 'libros', in the plural, implies a work of some size, at least two 'libri', not an epitome like Festus, the *Epitome de Caesaribus* (called a 'libellus' in the manuscript title), or even Aurelius Victor, but more like the rather full epitomes of Florus or even Eutropius, who devotes three and a half 'libri' to the imperial period. Besides, too small a work would not have contained enough information for Ausonius to have used it to compose a poem on third-century usurpers, judging from his practice in the *Caesares* and his other 'catalogue' poems. It is unlikely that the *Tyranni* was nothing more than a catalogue of names (though such a possibility cannot be ruled out when one is dealing with Ausonius). If it was written in Latin, Eusebius' work probably followed the general trend of pagan fourth-century Latin historiography, and therefore was a shortish set of imperial biographies, like an enlarged Eutropius or Victor. But what if Eusebius wrote in Greek?

Green, followed in great detail by Hagith Sivan, identified Eusebius Nanneticus with a known Greek historian Eusebius who wrote a history in at least nine books from Octavian, Trajan, and Marcus (Aurelius) to the death of Carus. Two apparent fragments of this work survive, both dealing with the mid-third century.²⁷

²² Reeve, *op. cit.* (n. 19), 120, and Green, *CQ*, 229–30.

²³ Green suggests that Ausonius changed metres halfway through the poem to better deal with the more awkward third-century names. This is not, as he claims, analogous to such changes of verse in the *Parentalia* and the *Professores*, since there Ausonius switches metre only for a very few individuals, not for half of an entire work, as would be the case with a single *Caesares/Tyranni*. This also implies that Mansionario was mistaken in regarding the *Caesares/Tyranni* as two separate works. The detail and care revealed elsewhere in the list belies this (cf. Weiss, *op. cit.* n. 19, pp. 68–9).

²⁴ In his *Works of Ausonius* Green deviates even further from the evidence by suggesting that the *Tyranni* covered the period from Alexander Severus to Ausonius' own time (pp. 557–8).

²⁵ Cf., for example, the use of the phrase by Eutropius (10.4.4), of Maximinus (already a legitimate emperor) rebelling against Licinius (another legitimate emperor), and by Jerome (170^b), of the Athenians rebelling against Rome.

²⁶ The last major usurper under Diocletian, Achilleus, was defeated in March 298, but two other minor usurpers appeared in 303 (see T. D. Barnes, *The New Empire of Constantine and Diocletian* (Harvard, Mass., 1982), p. 12. Cf. Green, *Ausonius*, p. 558, for the date of the *Caesares*; the *Tyranni* was probably written at the same time.

²⁷ Green, *CQ* (cit. n. 21), p. 230, and Hagith Sivan, 'The Historian Eusebius (of Nantes)', *JHS* 112 (1992), 158–63 (which appeared after the present paper had been accepted for

Unfortunately, no work that ended with the death of Carus (July/August 283) could have discussed usurpers under Diocletian, who was not proclaimed until Nov. 284.²⁸ The identification with the Greek Eusebius is illusory and one must assume that Nanneticus wrote in Latin for a Western audience.

Note that Ausonius was writing about usurpers. A most peculiar topic; unique in known Roman historiography. What could have prompted such an interest? The *Historia Augusta* obtrudes. As noted above, it is positively obsessed with usurpers. Here we have two works, the *Tyranni* and the *HA*, both excessively interested in usurpers. But the *HA* was written in the mid-390s, after Ausonius wrote the *Tyranni*, perhaps even after his death. However, the *KG* was an important source for the *HA* in exactly the period covered by its two multiple 'tyrant' *vitae*. Consider also the *Laterculus* of Polemius Silvius. His list of 'principes cum tyrannis' includes 42 usurpers between Augustus and Constantine, the period covered by the *KG*. These were essentially useless additions to the emperor list, yet the original compiler felt compelled to include them, almost certainly because of the prominence they were given in his source, the *KG*. Could Ausonius have become interested in usurpers in the same way as this early compiler, that is, by reading the *KG*? For where else would such a list of usurpers have come from if not the *KG*, since it probably presented the most complete list of usurpers ever assembled in Latin historiography? Very few others can be added from the *HA* and the *Epitome*, which both had access to Greek sources. To discount the *KG* means that there must have been another detailed source covering third-century emperors (and usurpers), and yet the evidence indicates that the *KG* was the only detailed Latin history of the third century available in the mid and late fourth century (see n. 7). We have seen above that when other contemporary historians wanted a source for the third century, they turned to the *KG*. Would Ausonius not have done the same thing? Could Eusebius Nanneticus have been the author of the *KG*?

If we examine all the known witnesses to the *KG* (see Appendix and n. 36), what sort of interest in usurpers is revealed? In the 260 years or so between Augustus and Elagabalus there are 11 usurpers; there are two during Constantine's 31 year reign; and in the 56 years between Decius and Diocletian there are 26 named usurpers, often with short accounts of their rise and fall. This matches the *Tyranni* exactly. Further, Ausonius' choice of starting the list of usurpers with Decius reflects neither surviving Greek histories of the period nor reality as it can be reconstructed from all available sources; it seems almost certainly to derive from the *KG*. If we discount Gordian I from this discussion, since we cannot tell whether he was considered a usurper by the *KG* or not,²⁹ we note that there is a large gap between Taurinus, the last usurper under Elagabalus (218–222), and Iotapianus, the next usurper, under Philip and Decius (249–251).³⁰ Indeed, the fact that three of the usurpers under Elagabalus – Sallustius, publication and I had no prior knowledge of its existence). Eusebius is mentioned by Evagrius *HE* v. 24 (cf. *PLRE* i. 301, s.v. Eusebius 1). This identification was also accepted by J.-P. Callu in the preface to Vol. 1.1 of his new edition and translation of the *Historia Augusta* (Paris, 1992), pp. xxxiv n. 82, li–lii and nn. 142–8, and lxx.

²⁸ Sivan is aware of this contradiction, but calls it 'a slight and insignificant discrepancy' (p. 162 n. 36).

²⁹ Neither Victor nor Eutropius treats Gordian I as a legitimate emperor, but they do not explicitly call him a usurper either. The *Epitome* considers him a usurper, but is relying on Greek sources at this point. Polemius considers him a usurper, but as can be seen below in the Appendix, on three other occasions (Odenatus, Felicissimus, and Faustinus) he identifies non-usurpers as usurpers.

³⁰ Iotapianus is placed under Philip by Polemius and Decius by Victor. The former would appear to be correct (cf. Dietmar Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle: Grundzüge einer römischen*

Uranus, and Seleucus – are not even mentioned by the witnesses to the *KG* apart from Polemius' list, which was obviously meant to be as complete as possible, suggests that they were nothing more than obscure names in the *KG*. This obscurity and lack of detail would have further increased the appearance of a large gap before the three usurpers under Decius and the ten, two years later, under Gallienus.

It was this large gap that caused Ausonius to begin his selection with Decius, for between c. 250 and c. 300 there was an apparent fifty-year block of an unprecedented number of usurpers, isolated from earlier and later usurpations that seemed minor and sporadic in comparison. In reality, however, there was no such gap before Decius. At least two of the usurpers listed by the *KG* under Elagabalus seem to belong under Severus Alexander (Sallustius and Taurinus), and from what we can tell from the Greek sources, there were others in Alexander's reign that were missed by the *KG*.³¹ A number of other known usurpers in this same period were also missed by the *KG*: Verus and Gellius Maximus under Elagabalus,³² Magnus and Quartinus under Maximinus, Sabinianus under Gordian III, and Pacatianus, Silbannacus, and Sponsianus under Philip Arabs.³³ Thus, in reality, the block of usurpers ending under Diocletian began in the reign of Elagabalus, not Decius; indeed, there were fewer usurpers under Decius than under either Elagabalus, Severus Alexander, or Philip. Thus Ausonius' interest in usurpers between Decius and Diocletian is exactly mirrored by the content of the *KG*, and the *Tyranni* shares a serious and major historical error with the *KG* in regarding the reign of Decius as the inception of the third century's famous series of usurpers.

In further support of this identification it should be noted that Eutropius, who is generally agreed to mirror the *KG* most closely, twice uses Ausonius' phrase 'res nouas molitus' to describe usurpers, including the first one he mentions after Decius. This phrase is also copied from the *KG* by Jerome and a similar expression is used by Aurelius Victor when describing Iotapianus.³⁴

That Ausonius' *Tyranni* derived ultimately from the *KG* I think is highly probable. But was Eusebius the author of the *KG* or an intermediary epitomator? The latter possibility must, of course, be allowed, that Eusebius was nothing more than another epitomator, one whose work was not popular or useful enough to have survived. But Eusebius is specifically named in full in Mansionario's list. This indicates that much was made of him and his history in the title and/or preface of Ausonius' original work; perhaps even more than Suetonius (who is not mentioned by Mansionario) in

Kaiserchronologie (Darmstadt, 1990), pp. 200–201), but Victor closely links the Decian usurpers Priscus and Valens with Iotapianus and states that Iotapianus' head was brought to Decius. It must have been, therefore, that the *KG* overlapped Iotapianus' usurpation with the reigns of Philip and Decius (perhaps correctly), and that Polemius' source noted Iotapianus' accession under Philip, while Victor and Ausonius his defeat under Decius. A similar situation may underlie the discrepancy regarding Taurinus, who is placed under Elagabalus by Polemius and Severus Alexander by the *Epitome*. Both agree on the unique but erroneous reference to 'Marcellus' as Caesar under Elagabalus (= Alexander; cf. *PIR*² M 192), which certainly indicates a common source (the *KG*), but Taurinus was an Eastern usurper and it would seem that the *Epitome* owes its other information not to the *KG* but to a Greek source (cf. Barnes, *CP* 71 (cit. n. 1), 264, and Jörg Schlumberger, *Die Epitome de Caesaribus: Untersuchungen zur heidnischen Geschichtsschreibung des 4. Jahrhunderts n. Chr.* Vestigia 18 (Munich, 1974), pp. 135–6). In both cases, however, Polemius' list may simply be in error (see above, n. 17).

³¹ Herodian VI.4.7, Dio 80.3.1, Zosimus 1.12, and Syncellus (674 and 675, Bonn).

³² Others are mentioned by Dio 79.7.2–4.

³³ For these, see Kienast (n. 30), pp. 175–6, 181–2, 186–7, 196, 200–201.

³⁴ Eutropius 9.5, 9.9.1; Jerome 219^f (and later at 233^e, also from the *KG*, but not included by Ausonius); Victor 29.1 ('tentans noua'). The corollary of this hypothesis, of course, is that Ausonius may have used the *KG* for the *Caesares* as well.

the first preface to the *Caesares*. This suggests an author of some importance for the topic. If he were an unknown, minor, or local historian, or Ausonius' relative, the reference would be pointless, since Ausonius was probably using the name as a basis of authority, given the extremely obscure nature of his subject matter. Ausonius was interested in history, but he was no historian. He would not have searched for rare or unusual literary sources and then trumpeted his discovery, he would have used whatever came to hand most easily or came most highly recommended. As noted above, all of his Latin-speaking contemporaries who wanted detailed material for the third century used the *KG*, so there is no reason why Ausonius should not have as well.

This identification cannot, of course, be proved – nothing can be proved on such meagre evidence – but unless there is evidence to suggest that Eusebius was someone else, the natural hypothesis is that Eusebius Nanneticus was the author of the *KG*.³⁵

University of Ottawa

R. W. BURGESS

APPENDIX THE USURPERS LISTED BY POLEMIVS SILVIUS AND THE WITNESSES TO THE *KG* TO 337

- [] – sources that do not explicitly identify cited usurper as a usurper
() – citations from the *HA*, which relied heavily upon Greek sources
{ } – current *Augustus* according to *KG*; page reference to Kienast (see above, n. 30)
Camillus: PS 7; *Epit.* 4.4 {Claudius; 94–5}³⁶
Vindex: PS 9; *Epit.* 5.6 {Nero; 100–101}
Clodius: PS 9 {Nero; 101}
Antonius: PS 14; *Epit.* 11.9 {Domitian; 119}
Cassius: PS 19; *Epit.* 16.11; (*Avidius Cassius*) {Marcus Aurelius; 142–3}
Pescennius: PS 26; Victor 20.8; Eutr. 8.18.4, *Epit.* 19.2, 20.2; (*Pescennius Niger*)
{Septimius Severus; 159–60}
Albinus: PS 26; Victor 20.8, 11; Eutr. 8.18.4; Jer. 212¹; *Epit.* 20.2; (*Clodius Albinus*)
{Septimius Severus; 160–1}
Sallustius: PS 31; otherwise unknown in Latin historical tradition³⁷ {Elagabalus; 181–2}
Uranus: PS 31; otherwise unknown in Latin historical tradition {Elagabalus; 176}
Seleucus: PS 31; otherwise unknown in Latin historical tradition {Elagabalus; 176}

³⁵ I should like to thank Hagith Sivan for first asking me about Eusebius Nanneticus (but she did not wait for my reply!), and Tim Barnes, Harry Bird, and an anonymous referee for *CQ* for their helpful comments on earlier drafts of this paper. A very short version of part two was delivered to the Classical Association of Canada's Annual Conference, at Charlottetown, P. E. I., in May 1992.

³⁶ PS: Polemius Silvius; Victor: Aurelius Victor; Eutr.: Eutropius; Jer.: Jerome, *Chronici canones*; *Epit.*: *Epitome de Caesaribus*. This list does not include the following: Amandus (Victor 39.17; Eutr. 9.20.3 {Maximian; 272}), who was a usurper but was not recognized as such by the *KG*; Julianus (Victor 39.22; *Epit.* 39.3–4 {Maximian; 273}), who was regarded as a usurper by the *KG* but was omitted by or has dropped out of Polemius' list; Aemilianus (PS 42; Victor 31.1–3; Eutr. 9.5; Jer. 219¹.8; *Epit.* 31.1–3 {210}), who was regarded as a usurper by the *KG*, but is not so recognized in Polemius' list (see above, p. 6); and Valens (*HA Gall.* 2.2–4, *Tyr. trig.* 19; *Epit.* 32.4 {224}), Aemilianus (*HA Tyr. trig.* 22, *Gall.* 4.1–2; *Epit.* 32.4 {224}), and Septimius (*Epit.* 35.3 {234}), usurpers under Gallienus who appear to derive from Greek sources.

³⁷ No usurper by this name is known to any historical tradition. The *HA* mentions a usurper called Macrianus with whom Sallustius is probably correctly identified (*Alex. Sev.* 49.3–4), but the Greek historian Dexippus is cited as the source for this information.

Taurinus: PS 31; *Epit.* 24.2 {Elagabalus; 182}
 duo Gordiani: PS 34; cf. [(*Gord. tres.*)], *Epit.* 26.1; [unus Gordianus: Victor 26.1–4;
 Eutr. 9.2.1 (cf. *Gord. tres* 2.1)] {Maximinus; 188–9}

[accession of DECIUS]

Iotapianus: PS 38; Victor 29.2 {Philip and Decius; 200–201}
 Priscus: PS 40; Victor 29.2 {Decius; 206}
 Valens: PS 40; Victor 29.3; *Epit.* 29.5 (*Tyr. trig.* 20) {Decius; 206}
 Ingenuus: PS 45; Victor 33.2; Eutr. 9.8.1 (*Tyr. trig.* 9) {Gallienus; 220}
 Regalianus: PS 45; Victor 33.2; Eutr. 9.8.1; *Epit.* 32.3 (*Tyr. trig.* 10) {Gallienus;
 220–221}
 Postumus: PS 45; Victor 33.8; Eutr. 9.9.1; Jer. 221^a; *Epit.* 32.3 (*Tyr. trig.* 3)
 {Gallienus; 240–241}
 Laelianus: PS 45; Victor 33.8; Eutr. 9.9.1; *Epit.* 32.4 (*Tyr. trig.* 5) {Gallienus; 241–2}
 Marius: PS 45; Victor 33.9; Eutr. 9.9.2 (*Tyr. trig.* 8) {Gallienus; 242}
 Macri<a>nus: PS 45 (*Tyr. trig.* 12) {Gallienus; 221–2}
 Quietus: PS 45 (*Tyr. trig.* 14) {Gallienus; 223}
 Odenatus: PS 45 [Eutr. 9.10; Jer. 221^a]; (*Tyr. trig.* 15) {Gallienus; 236–7}
 Aureolus: PS 45; Victor 33.17–20; *Epit.* 32.4 (*Tyr. trig.* 11) {Gallienus; 225–6}
 Victorinus: PS 49; Victor 33.12; Eutr. 9.9.3; Jer. 221^a; *Epit.* 34.3 (*Tyr. trig.* 6)
 {Gallienus; 243}
 Vabalathus: PS 49 (*Aurel.* 38.1; cf. *Tyr. trig.* 27) {Aurelian; 237}
 Zenobia: PS 49; Eutr. 9.13.2; Jer. 222^a; *Tyr. trig.* 30) {Aurelian; 238–9}
 Antiochus: PS 49 (cf. *Aurel.* 31.2) {Aurelian; 239}
 Felicissimus: PS 49 [Victor 35.6; Eutr. 9.14; *Epit.* 35.4; (*Aurel.* 38.2–4)] {Aurelian;
 235}
 Tetricus pater: PS 49; Victor 33.14, 35.3–5; Eutr. 9.10.1, 13.1–2; Jer. 221^a, 222^a; *Epit.*
 35.7 (*Tyr. trig.* 24) {Aurelian; 244}
 Tetricus filius: PS 49; Victor 33.14, 35.3–5 (*Tyr. trig.* 25) {Aurelian; 245–6}
 Faustinus: PS 49; [Victor 35.4] {Aurelian; 246}
 Saturninus: PS 53; Victor 37.3; Eutr. 9.17.1; Jer. 224^a; *Epit.* 37.2 (*Quad. tyr.* 7–11)
 {Probus; 253}
 Proculus: PS 53; Eutr. 9.17.1; *Epit.* 37.2 (*Quad. tyr.* 12–13) {Probus; 252–3}
 Bonosus: PS 53; Victor 37.3; Eutr. 9.17.1; *Epit.* 37.2 (*Quad. tyr.* 14–15) {Probus;
 251–2}
 Julianus: PS 57; Victor 39.10; *Epit.* 38.6 {Carinus; 259}
 Achilles: PS 59; Victor 39.23, 38; Eutr. 9.22.1, 23; Jer. 225^a, 226^a; *Epit.* 39.3
 {Diocletian; 266}
 Carausius: PS 59; Victor 39.20; Eutr. 9.21, 22.1; Jer. 225^a; *Epit.* 39.3 {Diocletian;
 274–5}
 Allectus: PS 59; Victor 39.40; Eutr. 9.22.2 {Diocletian; 275}

[Retirement of DIOCLETIAN]

Domitius Alexander: PS 62; Victor 40.17–18; *Epit.* 40.2 {Constantine; 289}
 Calocerus: PS 63; Victor 41.11; Jer. 233^a {Constantine; 304}