

APPENDIX

TABLE: SUBSISTENCE ANNUITIES IN JURISTIC SOURCES

	Amount Payable		Estimated Value	Recipient
	Monthly	Yearly		
I. Subsistence annuities:				
1. Scaev. D. 33.1.13.1. . . .		Den 12 (A)	HS 48	freedmen
2. Scaev. D. 34.1.18 pr. . . . .	MP 7 (C?)	MP 10 (V)	HS 376	freedmen
3. Scaev. D. 34.3.28 pr. . . . .	Den 6 (A)	Den 25 (V)	HS 388	two minors
4. Scaev. D. 34.1.20.2. . . .		<i>nummi</i> 100	HS 400	two freedmen
5. Scaev. D. 34.1.20.3. . . .	Aur 5 (C)	Aur 50 (V)	HS 440 (?)	freedman
6. Scaev. D. 34.1.18 pr. . . . .	MP 10 (A,C)		HS 480	freedmen
7. Scaev. D. 36.2.27.1. . . .	Den 10 (C)		HS 480	freedmen
8. Scaev. D. 34.1.16.2. . . .		HS 500 (A)	HS 500	freedwoman
9. Scaev. D. 10.2.39.2. . . .	Den 10 (C)	Den 25 (V)	HS 580	freedman
10. Papin. D. 33.1.10 pr. . . . .		Aur 6	HS 600 (?)	friend (fd.?)
11. Scaev. D. 34.4.30 pr. . . . .	Den 5	Den 125 (V)	HS 740 (340?)	<i>alumna</i>
12. Scaev. D. 33.1.18.1. . . .	MP 10	MP 100	HS 880	<i>alumnus</i> (fd.)
13. Scaev. D. 34.1.20 pr. . . . .		Aur 10	HS 1,000 (?)	freedman
II. Some larger annuities (from note 41):				
1. Papin. D. 34.1.9.1. . . .	unc. (C)	Aur 20 (V)	HS 2,000 +	freedman
2. Scaev. D. 33.1.19 pr. . . . .		MP 600 (A)	HS 2,400	two freedmen
3. Paul D. 35.1.84. . . .	Den 100 (A)	unc. (V)	HS 4,800 + (?)	freedmen
4. Scaev. D. 33.1.21.1. . . .		NP 10	HS 10,000	freedwoman
5. Scaev. D. 34.5.29. . . .		10 (A)	HS 10,000	freed couple
6. Scaev. D. 34.1.15 pr. . . . .		NP 20 (A)	HS 20,000	<i>alumnus</i>

NOTE.—Sources are ordered by ascending estimated annual value of the annuity. Coinage values are Aur(ei), Den(arii), or HS (sestertii); MP indicates a masculine plural value marker in the original text, NP indicates a neuter plural. When the source clearly names annuities, A are *alimenta*, C are *cibaria*, and V are *vestiaria*.

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THE THERMOPYLAE GARRISON OF *VITA CLAUDII* 16

This note concerns a passage from the *Historia Augusta* that purports to be a mid-third-century letter between emperor and provincial official.<sup>1</sup> The specifics of the letter, while perhaps individually plausible, collectively are not, and

1. Whenever dealing with the *Historia Augusta* one's position must be declared: 1) its composition can be provisionally assigned a *terminus post quem* of 393/94 with a *terminus ante quem* of 402, see T. Honoré, "Scriptor *Historiae Augustae*," *JRS* 77 (1987): 156–57, nn. 9–12; 2) it is the product of one author and not six, so H. Dessau, "Über die Zeit und Persönlichkeit der *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*," *Hermes* 24 (1889): 337; and, 3) "Trebellius Pollio," author of the *Vita Claudii* and fictional literary persona behind whom the sole author "*Scriptor*" hides, supposedly enjoyed his *floruit* while Flavius Constantius Chlorus was Caesar (1 March 293 to 1 May 305), *Vit. Cl.* 1.1, 3.1, 10.7, so T. D. Barnes, *The Sources of the "Historia Augusta"*, Collection Latomus 155 (Bruxelles, 1978), p. 14. Honoré, "Scriptor," p. 172, n. 274,

consequently the passage has been dismissed as pure fiction. Tony Honoré has drawn attention to such out-of-place details and has interpreted them as hidden references to late fourth-century events.<sup>2</sup> This note will test Honoré's hypothesis by pointing out such details and then by superimposing them upon the historical tapestry of the late fourth century to see what appears.<sup>3</sup> In the course of doing so it will become clear that Honoré's chronology for the composition of the *Historia Augusta* between 393/94 and 395 requires adjustment, since *Vita Claudii* 16 will be shown to contain several camouflaged allusions to events that began in late 395/96.

(1) Item epistola Decii de eodem Claudio. "Decius Messalae praesidi Achaiae salutem." inter cetera: "tribunum vero nostrum Claudium, optimum iuvenem, fortissimum militem, constantissimum civem, castris, senatui et re[i] p[ublicae] necessarium, in Thermopylas ire praecipimus mandata eidem cura Peloponnensium, scientes neminem melius omnia, quae iniungimus, esse curaturum. (2) huic ex regione Dardanica dabis milites ducentos, ex catafractariis centum, ex equitibus sexaginta, ex sagittariis Creticis sexaginta, ex tyronibus bene armatos mille. (3) nam bene illi novi creduntur exercitus; neque enim illo quisquam devotior, fortior, gravior invenitur." [*Scriptores Historiae Augustae*, vol. 2, ed., E. Hohl (Leipzig, 1965), p. 147]

(1) Similarly a letter of Decius' concerning this same Claudius: "From Decius to Messala, the governor of Achaia, greetings." Among other things the following: "But to our tribune Claudius, a fine young man, a most courageous soldier, a most loyal citizen, an essential asset to the camp, Senate, and State, we are issuing orders to go to Thermopylae, entrusting to his care the Peloponnesians as well, for we know that no one will carry out more carefully all our wishes. (2) From the region of Dardania you will give him two hundred foot-soldiers, one hundred heavy cavalry, sixty horsemen, sixty Cretan archers, and one thousand raw recruits, all well equipped. (3) For it is well to entrust raw troops to him, because none can be found more loyal, valiant, or earnest than he."

The *Historia Augusta* abounds with such passages whose contents contain a mixture of fact and fantasy. Herein lies Honoré's fundamental contribution (and challenge), for he has provided a theoretical basis upon which one can use surface oddities to de-crypt the subsurface "hidden and covert" messages so carefully encoded by the *Historia Augusta's* author "*Scriptor*."

On the surface, this passage parades several details that are inappropriate within a third-century context. The title *praeses Achaiae* was not in use during the lifetime of the Emperor Claudius II.<sup>4</sup> Its presence could perhaps be seen as an example of deliberate bureaucratic playfulness on the part of "*Scriptor*," whom Honoré portrays as a petty functionary placed within the office of the urban prefecture.<sup>5</sup> In order to shore up the outward credibility of this document, "*Scriptor*" (if Honoré is correct) then cleverly used military *termini technici* that were current both during Claudius'

further suggests that the name "Trebellius Pollio" itself is a code for *rebellio*, a term used in the *Hist. Aug.* for "rebel," *Vit. Marc.* 29.4, *Vit. Avid.* 9.11, *Vit. Gall.* 19.6.

2. Honoré, "*Scriptor*," pp. 156–76.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 173: "The test of these hypotheses is whether they provide a context in which some of the problems of *HA* become less intractable. Time will tell."

4. Used only during the Tetrarchy until A.D. 314, so E. Groag, *Die Reichsbeamten von Achaia in spätromischer Zeit* (Budapest, 1946), pp. 13, 15–16, 19.

5. Honoré, "*Scriptor*," pp. 156, 168.

lifetime and thereafter: *tribunus militum*,<sup>6</sup> *Dardania milites*,<sup>7</sup> *catafractarii*,<sup>8</sup> *sagittarii Creticii*,<sup>9</sup> and *tyrones*. Initially this "order of battle" was dismissed by Birley as highly improbable,<sup>10</sup> but he subsequently amended his position in light of the *cohors II Cretensis* preserved in the *Notitia dignitatum* (34.47).<sup>11</sup> Chastagnol likewise noted textual similarities between Vegetius and this passage and concluded that its military terminology was that of the late fourth century retrojected into a mid-third-century context.<sup>12</sup> From a purely late fourth-century perspective, therefore, this "order of battle" and its numbers could plausibly describe a legionary troop detachment commanded by a *tribunus*.<sup>13</sup>

Other surface oddities include the inappropriate use of stock phraseology. "*Scriptor*s" often repeated patriotic talisman of devotion, *rei publicae necessarius*,<sup>14</sup> once thought by Dessau to have been current only during the late Empire,<sup>15</sup> now has been shown by Klebs to have enjoyed a much broader chronology,<sup>16</sup> and hence was employed by "*Scriptor*" as further third-century camouflage. Yet, "*Scriptor*s" emphatic

6. A common rank of the third and fourth centuries, so Th. Mommsen, "Das römische Militärwesen seit Diocletian," *Hermes* 24 (1889): 268–69 and R. Grosse, *Römische Militärgeschichte von Gallienus bis zum Beginn der byzantinischen Themenverfassung* (Berlin, 1920), pp. 145–50.

7. Well-attested from the late first through late fourth and early fifth centuries: *ala I Vespasiana Dardanorum* (ILS 1999 [A.D. 99]); *ala I Dardanorum* (IGRR 3 777, ILS 1352 [Trajanic], 7184, 8852, 2189 [A.D. 241]); *cohors I Aurelia Dardanorum* (CIL 3 8251); *cohors II Aurelia Dardanorum Antoniniana equitata* (ILS 9154); and *cohors III Alpinorum Dardanorum* (Not. Dign. 32.53). See also S. Dušanić, "Mounted Cohorts in Moesia Superior," in J. Fitz, ed. *Limes: Akten des XI. Internationalen Limeskongresses* (Budapest, 1977), pp. 237–38; and E. Birley, *Arheološki Vestnik* 28 (1977): 180–82.

8. *Catafractarii* are in evidence from Hadrianic times through the mid-third century: *Ala I Gallor(um) et Pannanior(um) catafractatae* (CIL 11 5632 = ILS 2735 [Hadrianic]); *ala firma cataphractaria Philippiana* (CIL 3 10307 = ILS 2540); *CIL* 13 7323 = ILS 9148 (dated to Maximinus Thrax [A.D. 234–38]), cf. Herod. 8.1.3; and ILS 2771 = AE 1931 68 (A.D. 244–49). A. von Domaszewski, *Die Geographie bei den Scriptores Historiae Augustae*, Sitzungsberichte Philol.-hist. Klasse, 15. Abh. (Heidelberg, 1916), pp. 15, 20, lumped the *catafractarii* of this passage with those in *Vit. Alex. Sev.* 56.5 and *Vit. Aur.* 11.4, 34.4, which he believed were derived from Ammianus Marcellinus (16.10.8). Ammianus' interchangeable use of the terms *catafractarii* and *clibanarii* is troublesome (J. W. Eadie, "The Development of Roman Mailed Cavalry," *JRS* 57 [1967]: 168–70, 172, n. 63), since the *clibanarii* went out of actual use during the late fourth and early fifth centuries, while descriptions of them were continued, so F. M. Clover, "The Pseudo-Boniface and the *Historia Augusta*," *BHAC* 1977/78 (1980): 82; and D. Hoffmann, *Das spätromische Bewegungsheer und die Notitia Dignitatum* (Düsseldorf, 1969) 1:267; 1:69–72, 2:24–25, nn. 123–58; 1:265–77, 2:110–17, nn. 602–727.

9. Evidence for *sagittarii* span the first to late fourth centuries: *cohors I Cretum sagittarior(um)* (CIL 16 163 [A.D. 110]) in Dacia; the same unit later in Germania Superior, *CIL* 13 7513 = ILS 2570; *cohors I Cretum* (CIL 16 39 [A.D. 93], 46 [A.D. 100], and 111 [A.D. 159/60]). See J. L. Davies, "Roman Arrowheads from Dinorben and the *Sagittarii* of the Roman Army," *Britannia* 8 (1977): 269–70, for *sagittarii* from the first to third centuries. The *Not. Dign.* lists fifty-four units of *numeri sagittarii* horse and thirteen foot in the east alone.

10. E. Birley, "Military Intelligence and the *Historia Augusta*," *BHAC* 1964/65 (1966): 41.

11. E. Birley, "True and False: Order of Battle in the *HA*," *BHAC* 1977/78 (1980): 35.

12. Vegetius *Epit. rei mil.* 1.14–16, 3.23 and *Vit. Cl.* 16.2; A. Chastagnol, "Végece et l'Histoire Auguste," *BHAC* 1971 (1974): 70.

13. Post-Diocletianic infantry troop strengths (legionary detachment—*die sogenannte Neulegio*, *auxilium*, and *cohors*) have been estimated at about 1000, 500, and 500 strong respectively, while the various cavalry designations (*scholae*, *vexillationes*, *equites*, *alae*) have been reckoned at about 500 each, so Mommsen, "Militärwesen," pp. 254–57, 268, and Hoffmann, *Spätromische Bewegungsheer*, 2:4. Late Roman tribunes have been known to hold commands at all legionary levels, so R. Grosse, "Die Rangordnung der römischen Armee des 4.–6. Jahrhunderts," *Klio* 15 (1918): 149.

14. *Tyr. Trig.* 9.2, *Vit. Cl.* 16.1, *Vit. Avid. Cass.* 1.2, 2.7, *Vit. Pescen.* 3.5, *Vit. Car.* 10, *Vit. Helio.* 13.5, *Vit. Max. Balb.* 2.7, *Vit. Alex.* 15.3, *Quad. Tyr.* 9.5, and perhaps *Vit. Aur.* 37.1.

15. Dessau, "*Scriptores Historiae Augustae*," p. 387, n. 3; E. Klebs, "Die Scriptores Historiae Augustae," *RhM* 47 (1892): 29, n. 3; and J. P. Callu, "La Première diffusion de l'Histoire Auguste (VI<sup>e</sup>–IX<sup>e</sup>)," *BHAC* 1982/83 (1985): 111, n. 74.

16. E. Klebs, "Die Sammlung der Scriptores Historiae Augustae," *RhM* 45 (1890): 453, n. 1; Cic. *Leg.* 3.46, Suet. *Tit.* 7.2, Hegesipp. 3.2.50, *CIL* 8 352 (undated, but judged pre-Diocletianic by Klebs), Eutropius 10.16, and Vegetius *Epit. rei mil.* 2.1.

use of this patriotic phrase seems to have been employed with a clear purpose in mind, namely, to emphasize the patriotic qualities of Claudius in a manner as heavy-handed as possible. Why should such emphasis be made, given Claudius' heroic record and warrior-death in service to the State? In context, the presence of this phrase should draw our attention and be a cause for reflection, if not suspicion.

Another phrase that possesses no relevance whatsoever within the context of the third century is "in Thermopylas ire praecipimus mandata eidem cura Peloponnesium . . . esse curaturum." Nowhere else in the literature of the empire is Thermopylae and the Peloponnesus so mentioned in tandem *except* in an early fifth-century source that refers to events during the last decade of the fourth century. Furthermore, this dispatch to Thermopylae of troops during the third century is also curious. Damerau saw no reason why Thermopylae should have been garrisoned during the mid-third century,<sup>17</sup> neither did Alföldy, who has argued that many of the military posts mentioned in the *Historia Augusta*, including Thermopylae, were the product of pure invention.<sup>18</sup> At issue is this: was Achaëa so at risk during the mid-third century that a military force had to be dispatched to protect its northern land frontier? It is true that organized Roman resistance along the Danube during the mid-third century deteriorated as political anarchy escalated; barbarians took full advantage of this situation.<sup>19</sup> Despite the loss of the Emperor Decius and his son near Abrittus in 251,<sup>20</sup> barbarian incursions into the Balkans do not appear to have extended as far south as Achaëa. Furthermore, if such garrison troops had been stationed at Thermopylae by Decius, then why were they not dispatched north to help raise the siege of Thessalonica in 254, when that city's inhabitants defended themselves because imperial relief forces never materialized?<sup>21</sup> The simplest answer is that there were no imperial troops at Thermopylae to dispatch to Thessalonica and no physical evidence supports the military occupation of that land frontier during the mid-third century. Why then did "*Scriptor*" choose to write about Thermopylae, its young commander Claudius, and his troops, when in fact such a fine commander and his troops were much needed elsewhere in Moesia and Thrace, where plentiful opportunities for glory could be found, if not invented? Indeed throughout this passage "*Scriptor*" seems to be making several points, none of which are germane to the mid-third century, but whose meaning lurks beneath the surface and requires interpretation.

17. P. Damerau, *Kaiser Claudius II. Gothicus (268–270 N. Chr.)*, *Klio* Beiheft 33 (Leipzig, 1934), p. 23.

18. "Die Orstnamen in der *Historia Augusta*," *BHAC* 1979/81 (1983), p. 17.

19. For the next fifteen years, so Oros. 7.23.1 and Jordanes *Romana* 288.

20. Dexipp. *FGrH* 465–66 F22 = Sync. p. 705.10, Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 29.1–5, Eutropius 9.4, Zosimus 1.23, Jordanes *Getica* 90, Cedr. 453, and Zonar. 12.20. See also F. Lammert, "Zum Kampf der Goten bei Abrittus in J.251," *Klio* 34 (1942): 125–26, on the importance of the *Strategikon* 4.3 of pseudo-Maurice for this battle.

21. Zosimus 1.29.2. In this context we are told by Syncellus (p. 715.11–12) that Thermopylae was defended. Given Thessalonica's recent hardship and its lack of imperial support, Thermopylae most likely was watched over by a temporary force made up of Achaean militias under the command of its governor. Such readiness has the precedent of the 170/71 Kostobokoi raid to commend it, when volunteers from Elatea (Paus. 10.34.5), and possibly from Thespieae and Athens (A. Plassart, "Une levée de volontaires Thespiens sous Marc Aurèle," in *Mélanges Gustave Glotz* [Paris, 1932], 2:731–38 and J. H. Oliver, *Marcus Aurelius, Hesperia* Suppl. 13 [Princeton, 1970], p. 101), assisted Roman troops in the defense of their province under the command of L. Iulius Vehilius Gratus Iulianus (*PIR* 2 1 615; A. von Premerstein, "Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Kaisers Marcus. II. Seezüge der Nordpontusvölker und der Mauren. Der Einfall der Kostoboken," *Klio* 12 [1912]: 139–78). Add also the later heroics of the Athenian historian Dexippus during the Herulian raid of 267 (Dexipp. *FGrH* 472 F28, and F. Millar, "P. Herennius Dexippus: the Greek World and the Third-Century Invasions," *JRS* 59 [1969]: 12–29).

If one is willing to peer beneath the surface, it is possible to detect several threads of covert meaning, the transmission of which can be attributed to the skill of "*Scriptor*."<sup>22</sup> Specifically the hidden message of this passage lies in its satirical allusions to events and treacherous personalities during the closing years of the fourth century. Consider for a moment a contemporary event to which "*Scriptor*" is more likely to be referring—the treacherous actions of the Roman Army at Thermopylae. Late in the summer or early fall of 395 Alaric and his Visigothic army had just avoided extermination in Thessaly by Stilicho's army.<sup>23</sup> With a hungry army seeking winter quarters, Alaric turned south and entered Achaea via the Thermopylae pass.<sup>24</sup> The military commander of the pass, Gerontius, for reasons unknown allowed him to enter the province uncontested. The immediate result was that Central Greece was ravaged,<sup>25</sup> and Alaric's engorged army continued south to the Corinthian Isthmus, where Alaric again faced the same Gerontius, who again allowed them passage—this time to the Peloponnesus to begin that region's occupation and domination until Stilicho's army appeared in the region in 397.<sup>26</sup>

Who then was this Gerontius?<sup>27</sup> Zosimus is our sole source for this individual and his deeds.<sup>28</sup> It is believed that his command originated from the *praefectus praetorio Orientis* himself, Flavius Rufinus,<sup>29</sup> who gave him orders to allow Alaric's unhindered southern trek. So is usually explained his double duplicity.<sup>30</sup> His military rank and the force that he commanded are difficult to determine from Zosimus' words: Γερόντιον τῶν ἐφεσθηκότα τῇ Θερμοπυλῶν φυλακῇ (5.5.5). Zosimus' neutral term ἐφεσθηκώς most likely meant *praefectus*.<sup>31</sup> By post-Diocletianic times, this antiquated title was fast being replaced with *praepositus* or *praepositus et tribunus*.<sup>32</sup> By 370 and thereafter, the simplified title of *tribunus* prevailed,<sup>33</sup> a rank that could command a field detachment of practically any size. Therefore, even if Gerontius' rank reveals little as to how many troops he commanded, it does reveal his command potential. And if Gerontius was a former *dux Skythiae* as some believe,<sup>34</sup> then that potential was considerable. His force should have been able to stop the Visigoths at Thermopylae in the late summer or early autumn of 395, but for whatever reason or reasons they did not; instead, they allowed the Visigoths unhindered passage. All we

22. Note "*Scriptor*'s" remarkable ability for transpositions: "What he says of one person, time, event or circumstance is often true in regard to a different person, time, event or circumstance," so Honoré, "*Scriptor*," p. 173.

23. Socrates *Hist. Eccl.* 7.10. For chronology, see J. Koch, "Claudian und die Ereignisse der Jahre 395 bis 398," *RhM* 44 (1899): esp. 599–611.

24. Claud. *Get.* 186–88, Eunap. *VS* 7.3.4, Zosimus 5.5.5.

25. Claud. *Eutrop.* 2.214–15, *Get.* 186–88, Eunap. *VS* 8.1.10–2.3, Zosimus 5.5.3–8, 5.6.3–5, 5.26.1, and John of Antioch frag. 190.

26. Zosimus 5.7.1–2, John of Antioch frag. 190.

27. O. Seeck, "Gerontius, Nr. 5," *RE* 7 (1910): 1270.4–9; Groag, *Reichsbeamten*, pp. 66–67; E. Dé-mougeot, *De l'unité à la division de l'empire romaine 395–410* (Paris, 1951), p. 166, n. 241 and *PLRE* 1 (6).

28. Zosimus 5.5.3, 5, and 5.6.4, respectively.

29. *PLRE* 1 (8).

30. Claud. *In Rufin.* 2. See, for full discussion, A. Cameron, *Claudian* (Oxford, 1970), pp. 73–74, 89.

31. O. Seeck, "Gerontius," col. 1270.4, and R. T. Ridley, *Zosimus* (Canberra, 1982), pp. 101 and 208, n. 17. See H. J. Mason, *Greek Terms for Roman Institutions: A Lexikon and Analysis* (Toronto, 1974), p. 51, s.v. ἐφίστημι. Cf. Herod. 1.8.1.

32. Grosse, "Rangordnung," p. 152.

33. Mommsen, "Militärwesen," p. 270, and nn. 1 and 3.

34. Groag, *Reichsbeamten*, p. 67; A. Lippold, "Gerontius nr. 2," *Kleine Pauly* 2 (1979): 773.7–9; and the editors of the *PLRE* 1 (6).

can surmise about Gerontius' force is that it had been detached from Stilicho's army while it was in Thessaly and that it was made up (at least in part) of cavalry.

Given the Balkan situation in late 395 through 397, it is tempting to speculate that "*Scriptor*" had far more on his mind than the militarization of Achaëa's northern frontier during the mid-third century. *Vita Claudii* 16 provided "*Scriptor*" with a literary vehicle from which he could safely comment on contemporary events and covertly compare a noble, loyal, and ideal military commander with an all too ignoble, treasonous, and treacherous late fourth-century example. This hypothesis is strengthened by the horrific Visigothic devastation of Central Greece and the Peloponnesus.<sup>35</sup> The bitter intensity of this allusion is unmistakable—all the more so because of the passage's hero, Claudius. What better place to comment on such current events than to initiate a subtle comparison between the young Claudius, the future "Gothicus,"<sup>36</sup> with the contemporary Gerontius: an individual apparently in open collusion with, if not in the service of, a Goth. Such patent duplicity seems to have immensely impressed "*Scriptor*," for he made his point even more emphatic with the blunt use of strong superlatives in his idealization of Claudius as a *fortissimum militem, constantissimum civem*. In 395/96, when the Empire's capitals were in dire need of strong and capable leadership, yet did not possess it, "*Scriptor*" seems to yearn for a strong individual to step forward and be "a young Claudius."

Thus far the application of Honoré's approach in interpreting the out-of-place details of the *Historia Augusta* as "hidden and covert" references to late fourth-century events has raised this particular passage from the realm of pure fiction to that of potential contemporary commentary, if not satire. Following Honoré's lead, I would suggest that *Vita Claudii* 16 contains at least one encoded transposition: that "Claudius" provided a positive moral contrast to the outright treachery of his parallel Gerontius. No doubt "*Scriptor*'s" discerning readership<sup>37</sup> recognised this deviously entertaining trickery and appreciated the juxtaposition of positive and negative foils that pitted a faithful defender of the *Res Publica*—a former slayer of Goths—against a contemporary Gothic collaborator.

Yet, if Honoré's approach is valid, then his proposed chronology for the composition of the work must be amended in order to allow for "*Scriptor*'s" allusion to the Visigothic invasion of 395/97. Specifically, Honoré has argued for the composition of the *Historia Augusta* between 393/94 and 395;<sup>38</sup> Syme suggested "in the vicinity of 395";<sup>39</sup> and Chastagnol after the Battle of Frigidus (September 394) and before 398.<sup>40</sup> If the hidden allusion identified above is valid, then Honoré's and Syme's composition schedules should be amended to extend at least to 396 and perhaps even later to 397/98, since the occupation of the Peloponnesus did not end until 397.

Given the curious nature of the *Historia Augusta*, this note cannot reach any certain or final conclusions. Nonetheless, having followed Honoré's lead this note has

35. Zosimus 5.5.5–5.6.4, most likely derived from Eunapius and graphically attested in the archaeological remains and coin hoards of Central Greece, Attica, Corinthia, and the Peloponnesus.

36. *Vit. Cl.* 1.3 *qui bellum Gothicum sua virtute confecit*.

37. This inner circle is thought to be mainly composed of officials, so Honoré, "*Scriptor*," p. 160, n. 47.

38. Honoré, "*Scriptor*," p. 156, and nn. 10 and 165.

39. R. Syme, *Emperors and Biography: Studies in the "Historia Augusta"* (Oxford, 1971), p. 287. Idem, *Ammianus and the "Historia Augusta"* (Oxford, 1968), p. 79.

40. A. Chastagnol, *BHAC* 1963 (1964): 49, 63. Syme, *Ammianus*, p. 75: "there [i.e., in reference to Chastagnol's dating] the truth may reside."

attempted to show that the contents of *Vita Claudii* 16 better reflect conditions during the late fourth century than those of the mid-third; beneath its surface the passage contains an embittered commentary on the Visigothic invasion and occupation of Achaëa and upon those personalities directly involved with it. Any attempt to fix the *Historia Augusta's* composition must take the above allusion into consideration.

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