

The historian Eusebius (of Nantes)*

Over a century ago C. Müller published two fragments from a manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale (Codex Parisinus inter supplementa Graeca 607). One fragment (fol. 103v) is entitled 'From the ninth book of the histories by Eusebius: the siege of Thessalonike by the Scythians'. Another folio of the same manuscript (17r) contains an untitled and longer excerpt which describes counter-siege tactics invented or implemented in a city in Macedonia, followed by an unfinished description of the siege of a Gallic city (Tours).¹

There seems no reason to doubt the affiliation of each of these fragments with an historian by the name of Eusebius. Both were written in the Ionian dialect in a somewhat clumsy imitation of Herodotus' style. Other points common to both are a reference in both to Macedonia; the description of the siege of a city by barbarians; and the general chronology of the events described, which are commonly ascribed to the second half of the third century.² Eusebius is also attested by Evagrius (in the sixth century) as a historian who wrote a history of Rome from Augustus until the death of Carus (31 BC to 283 AD).³ It is a fair assumption that this historian lived under Diocletian.

Although Eusebius' difficult and vague fragments have served as a source material for historians, especially those of Roman Gaul, no scholarly agreement has been reached on the precise dates of the events described. Moreover, the historian has never been identified apart from the brief mention in Evagrius. It now seems possible, owing to the discovery of a list of lost works by the poet Ausonius of Bordeaux, to offer a more firm identification of the historian, his background, and the nature of his lost historical work.

Eusebius' fragments belong to a manuscript of unique importance.⁴ It is in fact a collection of several manuscripts put together during the Renaissance. At least six different hands can be detected, each responsible for a different part of the collection: 1-2 Two Byzantine authors, Nicetas Choniatas and John Chrysostom, were copied by two scribes and later placed at the beginning of the codex (fols. 1-15). 3 Selections from nine orations of Lysias (fols. 104-129), now at the end of the codex. 4 Aristodemus' Greek history (fragments) and Philostr-

* I wish to record my thanks to John Drinkwater, Robert Kaster and Kent Rigsby for their comments.

¹ *FHG* v 21-3 (Jacoby *FGrHist* 101). The fragment on the siege of Thessalonike was also published by Müller in an earlier volume (*FHG* iii 728), where the material was taken from the *Excerpt. Constantin.* and was appended to the work of Josephus.

² *FHG* v 21 (third century for the siege of Thessalonike), 23 (first century for the siege of Tours), corrected by Th. Reinach, 'Le premier siege entrepris par les Francs', *Rev. hist.* xliii (1890) 34-36 to the third century. See below for a detailed discussion of chronology.

⁴ For full descriptions, H. Omont, *Inventaire sommaire des manuscrits grecs de la Bibliothèque nationale. Ancien fonds grec* (Paris 1888) iii 282. Müller, *FHG* v, vii-xiv; C. Wescher, *La poliorcétique des Grecs* (Paris 1967) xv f.; H. Schöne, *Heronis Alexandrini opera quae supersunt omnia* iii (Leipzig 1903), xii f.; *idem*, 'Ueber des Mynascodex der griechischen Kriegsschriftsteller in der Pariser Nationalbibliothek', *MH* liii (1898) 432-47.

atus' Life of Apollonius (fols. 81-7). 5-6 The central and most important portion of the codex was the work of two scribes who put together a collection of excerpts devoted to matters pertaining to warfare (fols. 16-80; 82; 88-103).

In this last portion, the assortment of authors is remarkable and ranges over several centuries. Josephus on the siege of Jotapata opens the section (fol. 16), followed by our Eusebius (fol. 17, siege of Tours), and Athenaeus on war machines (fol. 18-24). Next comes a valuable work by Biton on the construction of war machines and catapults (fol. 25-32); and the Poliorcetica of Apollodorus (fol. 33-45). Several works by Hero follow, including the Belopoica (fol. 46-55), on the construction and measurement of chiroballistae (fol. 56-61) and *de dioptra* (fol. 62-80).⁵ Descriptions of sieges constitute the core of the rest of this portion with selections from Dionysius of Halicarnassus (fol. 88-89, from bk. xx, Pyrrhus); Polyaeus (fol. 90, on Alexander and Porus); Dexippus (fol. 91-2, sieges of Marcianopolis, Philippopolis and Sidon, *FHG* iii 18, 20-21); Priscus (fol. 93, sieges of Noviodunum and Naissus, *FHG* v 24-26); Arrian (fol. 94-7, sieges of Tyre and Gaza); Polybius (fol. 98-101, siege of Syracuse and Ambracia); Thucydides (fol. 102 siege of Plataea); and, once more, at the tail end of this portion, the other Eusebian fragment on the siege of Thessalonike (fol. 103).⁶

Whoever was responsible for this compilation was interested, above all, in the mechanics of siege and in counter-siege devices. That person had access to a library or a collection which included a good selection of Greek historical writings from Thucydides to Priscus. All the episodes described occurred in Greece, Magna Graecia, or the eastern provinces of the Roman empire, with the single exception of Eusebius' Tours. Since the precise context of the Eusebian fragments has not yet been clarified, it seems necessary to include a detailed examination of each before establishing the identity of the author.⁷ I also offer the first English translation of two major portions of the fragments.

Fragment (Müller, *FHG* v, 21; 1.1)

ΕΚ ΤΩΝ ΕΥΣΕΒΙΟΥ ΒΙΒΛΙΟΥ Θ' . ΠΟΛΙΟΡΚΙΑ ΘΕΣΣΑΛΟΝΙΚΗΣ ΥΠΟ ΣΚΥΘΩΝ

Οἱ δὲ Θεσσαλονικέες οὕτε ἐν τῷ τοιοῦτῳ ἀδρανέες εὐρέθησαν, ἀλλὰ τοῖσι ἐτοιμοῖσι εὐρισκομένοισι ὀπλισάμενοι, συστάντες τοὺς τε βιωμένους ἐσθέειν ἀπέρξαν, καὶ ἐν τῇ ταραχῇ αὐτῇ τῶν βαρβάρων τινὰς συναρπάξουσιν· τὸ δὴ πολλοῖς τῶν ἀπὸ τῆς πόλιος ἐξωγρημένοις πρόφασιν τῆς ἀνακομιδῆς παρεχόμενον·

⁵ The works on war machines and artillery by Biton and Hero are all mercifully accessible in E. W. Marsden, *Greek and Roman artillery: technical treatises* (Oxford 1971) 17-43; 65-77; 211-217.

⁶ Many of these authors feature in the list of Evagrius' (*HE* v 24) 'secular' historians: Josephus, Dionysius, Polybius, Dexippus, Arrian and Eusebius. This, in fact, may be some indication of the age of this anthology.

⁷ Although the fragment dealing with the siege of Thessalonike appears many folios after the one describing the siege of Tours, I follow here Müller's order and divisions of the text into fr. 1.1 (Thessalonike) and fr. 2.2-8 (Macedonia and Tours).

οἱ γὰρ δὴ βάρβαροι ὑπὲρ τοῦ κομῆ-σασθαί τοὺς σφετέρους, πολλοὺς τῶν εἶχον λαβόντες ἀπέδοσαν· οὐτ' ὅτε ἦσαν φθάντες οἱ βάρβαροι ὥστε τῇ σφετέρῃ στρατιῇ πᾶσαν τὴν πόλιν περιστοιχίσασθαί, (καὶ) οἱ ἀνὰ τὴν πόλιν οὐδὲν ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀπροσδοκῆτου ἀμβλυνθέντες οὐδὲ....

Translation: *From the ninth book of Eusebius: The siege of Thessalonike*

The people of Thessalonike were not found indolent in such a situation, but having armed themselves with whatever came into their hands they stood together and forcing the enemy into a narrow place they drove them off. In the tumult which followed they captured some of the barbarians. As a result, many citizens who had been captured were returned. For the barbarians, in order to get back their own people, gave back many of those whom they held after capturing them. And when the barbarians were preparing to encircle the entire city with their army, those inside the city were not disheartened by the unexpected...

The main point of this fragment seems to be the valiant defence organised by the inhabitants of Thessalonike against the barbarians who had laid siege to the city. Taken by surprise, the citizens' prompt and courageous reaction resulted not only in the successful repulse of the enemy but also in the release of hostages previously captured. Eusebius names the enemy 'barbarians' or 'Scythians', both terms meaning the Goths. The same variety of appellations appears in Zosimus' accounts of two sieges which Thessalonike experienced in the third century.

According to Zosimus' somewhat confused narrative (i 29), at the beginning of the reign of Valerian and Gallienus (253/54 AD) the Scythians and the Marcomanni raided Roman territory and besieged Thessalonike. Owing to the uncommon courage displayed by the inhabitants the raiders were forced to abandon the siege. This took place in the midst of the general turmoil into which all Greece had been plunged as a result of the great Gothic invasions and the inability of the emperors to organise appropriate defences.

Fifteen years later, in 268, Thessalonike survived another barbarian siege, the enemy this time arriving from the sea. Zosimus (i 43) says that the barbarians (Heruli, Peucini and Gothi) had siege machines which they advanced against the city walls. When they were about to capture the city, the arrival of imperial troops in the area was heralded. The siege was lifted and the enemy turned away to plunder the Macedonian hinterland. Commentators on both Eusebius and Zosimus agree that one of these sieges is the subject of the Eusebian fragment, but a more precise identification was never offered.⁸ One possible approach is through material common to both accounts.

1. In the description of the first siege of Thessalonike by Zosimus and in the Eusebian version the credit for the successful counter-attack is given to the inhabitants of

⁸ FHG v 21; Paschoud, *Zosime. Histoire nouvelle*, i 151, n. 56.

the city; in the second siege, however, its abandonment was due to the rumor of an approaching relief force.

2. Eusebius seems further to state that the Goths had hostages whom they released after the Thessalonikans' sally. The opportunity to capture hostages would have been more readily present in the course of raids by land, such as the first Gothic invasions, than in the course of naval operations such as those mounted by the Goths during their second invasion of Greece.

3. Eusebius' fragment and Zosimus' version of the city's first siege seem to imply that the inhabitants of Thessalonike were taken by surprise by the raid and were unprepared for a siege. On the other hand, the second siege of Thessalonike took place after the barbarians had arrived by sea at the end of a long voyage. The inhabitants would have had time to learn of their approach and prepare for the possibility of a siege.

4. No mention of siege machines is made in the surviving portion of Eusebius. Such machines figure, however, in the second of the episodes in Zosimus, but not in the first.

In view of the above, the conclusion is that the subject of the Eusebian fragment on Thessalonike was the first siege of the city in 253/4. The further significance of this date will be discussed below.

Now, Zosimus' source for the third century invasions of Greece seems to have been Dexippus, although some disagreement exists on this score.⁹ Eusebius, as a Greek historian, may have also consciously drawn upon and continued the Dexippian tradition. Of the Dexippian works which covered the third century, the so-called *Chronicle* and the *Scythica*, the latter appears as his likely source. According to the surviving fragments of the *Scythica* the main interest of their author was to extol the display of courage exhibited by the various Greek cities in the course of the barbarian invasions of Greece.¹⁰ Indeed, the Roman army is altogether absent from the repeated encounters between the invaders and the invaded, and the focus of the narrative is built into a pattern of an attack/resistance/strategies/barbarian retreat.¹¹ These are the points that emerge from the surviving portion of the first Eusebian fragment. Likewise, in the second Eusebian fragment the focus of the narrative continues to rest on self-aid and on manifestations of local resistance to hostile invaders, but this time in the west.

Fragment B-1 (Müller, *FHG* 21-2; 2.2-7, not translated)

As a prelude to the account of the siege of Tours, Eusebius narrates events which had taken place in Macedonia at an unspecified point in time. The beginning of the second fragment (2-7, not translated) reads like a fairy tale: A boy, playing with dart-throwers in a childish game in which he excelled, hit and killed a few of the enemy besieging his city. Although the enemy were panic-stricken, the inhabitants of the besieged city

⁹ See Paschoud, *Zosime*, i, xxxvii f. for an array of modern opinions supporting this theory. He himself reserves judgement.

¹⁰ F. Millar, 'D. Herennius Dexippus: The Greek world and the third century invasions', *JRS* lix (1969) 25; D. Armstrong, 'Gallienus in Athens 264', *ZPE* lxxx (1987) 253.

¹¹ Millar, *ibid*, 25.

put a stop to the 'game'. Using, however, the boy's tactics, they developed a device against the siege machines which the enemy had deployed to attack the walls. The enemy's artillery is not described, but may have been towers, or something similar which was wheeled near the walls in order to assault them.

At the heart of this portion stands the lengthy description of the flaming missiles (πυρφόρα βέλεα) which were thrown at the enemy's siege equipment. These fire darts were woven together and soaked in oil so that upon dispatch they would burst into flames. They could be shot from 'machines' or with bows, but were apparently ineffective, presumably because of problems of precision and range. At any rate, the device proved useful only when a large quantity of missiles or fire darts was thrown. What, precisely, is Eusebius describing? What was the purpose of such a lengthy digression?

Throughout his account Eusebius avoids technical terms, and from his description it is difficult, if not impossible, to reconstruct the type of machine which he had in mind.¹² Moreover, the historical circumstances of the 'invention' are not given in the surviving portion and, as a result, the chronology remains a matter of conjecture. Various forms of flame-throwers had been in existence since at least the fifth century BC.¹³ They were employed by the inhabitants of Tyre against Alexander the Great,¹⁴ in the siege of Salamis by Demetrius Poliorcetes in 305,¹⁵ in the siege of Rhodes shortly thereafter by the same Demetrius,¹⁶ and even at Actium.¹⁷ What is surprising, then, is that from the sequence of the Eusebian narrative (first the childish enterprise and then its development into an efficient full-scale war machine) the impression is formed that the author is describing a new weapon. If this impression is correct, either Eusebius was completely ignorant of the history of artillery, or, more likely, the story about the 'invention' of fire darts had nothing to do with the third century siege of Thessalonike of the earlier fragment.

Now, the description closest to Eusebius' fire darts comes from Ammianus in the fourth century.¹⁸ Among the pieces of artillery used by the emperor Julian against the Persians, Ammianus described the *malleoli*, or fire darts, constructed in precisely the same way as Eusebius' flaming arrows. Ammianus adds that water could not extinguish the fire which these caused; only dust could do so. He is, of course, fully aware that the *malleoli*, as well as the other pieces described in the artillery digression, are far from new. But, as he says,

¹² For one modern attempt, with illustrations, M. F. A. Brok, 'Ein spätrömischer Brandpfeil nach Ammianus', *Saalburg Jahrbuch* xxxv (1978) 57-60.

¹³ Thucydides iv 100, 115.2-3 with E. W. Marsden, *Greek and Roman artillery: historical development* (Oxford 1969) 51.

¹⁴ Arr. *Anab.* ii 21.2 with Marsden (n. 13) 103 (using the word *purphoroi*).

¹⁵ Diod. Sic. xx 48.6.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* 96.6.

¹⁷ Marsden (n. 13) 172.

¹⁸ xxiii 4.14-15: *malleoli autem, teli genus, figurantur hac specie: sagitta est cannea, inter spiculum et harundinem multifido ferro coagmentata, quae in muliebris coli formam (quo nentur lintea stamina), concavatur ventre subtiliter, et plurifariam patens, atque in alveo ipso ignem cum aliquo suspicit alimento* Cf. Eusebius 2.5-6.

there are always some whose ignorance can justify this sort of digression.¹⁹

Like the description of Ammianus, then, Eusebius' fire-darts can be taken as a digression. That this is indeed the case is further evident from the fact that nowhere in this part does Eusebius specify the enemy by name, nor is there a clue, at least in the surviving portion, regarding the historical background of the events described.²⁰ This lack of specification stands in marked contrast to the identification of the enemy as Scythians or 'barbarians' in the first fragment. Eusebius merely knew that fire darts were invented in Macedonia.

In this connection, an interesting piece of evidence from the work of Biton on the construction of war-engines and artillery can be brought to bear on the chronological problems. In this manual (fol. 25 of codex 607 in the BN where Eusebius' fragments also appear) Biton describes the construction of a stone-thrower (λιθοβόλος), which was designed by Isidorus of Abydos in Thessalonike in 315 BC.²¹ Although this machine is more powerful and sophisticated than Eusebius' fire-dart, the basic principle appears the same. When Eusebius came to describe his more primitive version, he probably recalled the story about Isidorus and Macedonian Thessalonike, and accordingly placed the invention of his fire darts in Macedonia.²²

To sum up, Eusebius' passage on fire-darts was composed as a sort of digression, and meant to serve as a prelude to the description of the siege of Tours. Perhaps it marked a shift of the narrative from events in the east to those in the west since the story of Tours seems to imply a break in what may have been a continuous historical narrative. Ammianus inserted his artillery digression for those unfamiliar with such devices. Eusebius inserted his in order to clarify what happened during the siege of Tours when the inhabitants used such a device against the enemy's artillery. This was important, for in the course of the Gallic siege the enemy developed a device to counter the anti-siege strategy of the defenders.

Fragment B-2 (Müller, *FHG* v,23; 2.8)

(8) Τάδε παρά γε Μακεδόνων αὐτῶν οὐκ ἤκουσα, ἐν δ' ἐτέρῃ πολιορκίῃ ἔμαθον ἀντιτεχνῶσθαι πρὸς τὰ πυρφόρα ταῦτα βέλεα, Κελτῶν προσκατημένων πόλει Τυρρηνῶν καλεομένη· ἔστιν δὲ αὕτη χώρας τῆς Γαλατίας τῶν ἐν τῇ ἐσπέρῃ κατοικημένων, ἔθνος τοῦ Λουγδουνησίου· χρόνος δὲ, κατ' ὄν (ἔτος) προσεκατέατο τῇ πολιορκίῃ, ἦν ἐν τῷ δὴ Γαλατίῃ πᾶσα καὶ τὰ ταύτη προσέχεα ἔθνεα ἀρχῇ τῇ Ῥωμαίων οὐ πιθέσκειτο, ἀλλ' ἀπεστήκει [καὶ] τοῖς ἐπανεστηκόσι συνεφρόνεε· (9) τότε γάρ, τῶν Κελτῶν τῶν πέρην Ῥήνου ἐπιστρατευσαμένων, μοίρη ἀπὸ τούτων ἀποσπασθεῖσα καὶ προσκατημένη

¹⁹ Amm. xxiii 4.1: *re ipsa admoneor, breviter quantum mediocre potest ingenium, haec instrumentorum genera ignorantibus circumscripte monstrare.*

²⁰ Eusebius merely uses the word *πολέμιος* to describe the other side.

²¹ 48-51, with Marsden (n. 5) 69.

²² 2.8: *τάδε παρά γε Μακεδόνων αὐτῶν οὐκ ἤκουσα.* I do not think that the use of the verb 'to hear' is an objection.

τῆ πόλει τῆ λελεγμένη, καταφλεχθεισέων σφί πολλέων μηχανημάτων, ἐξόπισθεν τῶν μηχανέων ἔλυτρα ὀρύξαντες πλέα ὕδατος ταῦτα ἐποίηον, ἔπειτα μολυβδίνους στεγανούς ἀγωγούς τοῦς ὑποδεζομένουσ καὶ πα.....

Translation:

About these events (i.e. those narrated just before, about fire missiles in Macedonia) I have not heard from the Macedonian themselves, (but) I did learn that in a different siege, when the Celts surrounded a city named Tours, a counter device against the fire darts was found. This city is situated in the land of the Galatians in the West, and is inhabited by the Lugdunensian people (or: in the province of Lugdunensis). At the time of the siege the whole of Galatia and its neighboring peoples did not obey the Roman rule but defected and joined the insurgents. When the Celts from across the Rhine undertook an expedition (into Gaul), a part of their force split off and besieged the aforementioned city; after many of their machines had been burnt, they dug trenches behind and filled them with water (to extinguish the fire), and subsequently (fired) from (machines) covered in lead that would receive...

That this episode belongs to the later part of the third century, sometime after the siege of Thessalonike in 253/4, seems clear enough from the historical context of the fragment. Historians of Roman Gaul have traditionally connected the events with the Germanic invasions which left a trail of destruction all over Gaul. Yet, a disagreement exists about the precise date of the siege: did it take place before the beginning of the so-called *Imperium Galliarum*, the independent entity created by a series of Gallic usurpers between 260 and 274, or after its fall?²³

The question of chronology has far-reaching implications. If the siege occurred as early as the 250s, Eusebius supplies important and unique information about urban fortifications in a period when many Gallic cities were for the most part unwallled. Moreover, the episode of Tours makes an important addition to our meagre knowledge concerning western resistance to barbarian attacks in the third century. So far, the only evidence of such resistance comes from Africa.²⁴ Eusebius' fragment further indicates that some Germanic people had knowledge of siege tactics and artillery in spite of the general impression, derived from writers like Ammianus in the fourth century, of poor military equipment among the

barbarians.²⁵ In addition, the fragment extends the routes of the Germanic invasions westward, to areas previously considered untouched by the general turmoil. As the fragment stands, the date of the siege of Tours cannot be established with precision. How much of the narrative is missing between this description and that of the siege of Thessalonike is impossible to gauge.²⁶ The use of the word 'Celts' by Eusebius does not furnish a precise clue, for the word can apply to any of the Germanic ethnic groups at the time, or may even be an evocation of the ancient Celts.²⁷ Yet the state of affairs described by Eusebius as the background of the siege of Tours, namely a total chaos in Gaul and along the *limes*, coupled with a revolt against Roman rule, seems to point to the early days of the *Imperium Galliarum*, perhaps even to the years just preceding its formation.

If the siege of Tours by a German raiding party occurred shortly after the siege of Thessalonike in 253/4, then at least Tours can be added to the small list of Gallic cities which possessed walls prior to the late third century, when the emperor Probus (275-82) was given the credit of fortifying many Gallic cities.²⁸ Perhaps the walls of Tours were hastily built as temporary emergency defences;²⁹ they proved vulnerable to the assaults of an enemy whose technical ability was in general poor. Indeed, at first, the siege machines advanced by the 'Celts' against the city walls were burning as fast as the fire-darts of the defenders hit them.

As the siege progressed Eusebius recorded an invention by the besiegers of a protective device to stop their siege engines from burning. That the invention was developed by the Germanic invaders seems remarkable. They may have been more mechanically developed than hitherto assumed and probably benefited from the presence of Roman defectors.

What are the features in this section of Eusebius' work that can tell us something about the author? In the first place, Eusebius seems to be unusually detailed in his Gallic section, and his information indicates close familiarity with the territory. He distinguishes between Galatia and Gaul, quite likely for the sake of his putative Greek readership; he correctly designates the city after its territory (Turones, the *civitas*) rather than as Caesarodunum, reflecting contemporary changes in Gaul; and he further knows that the city belonged to the 'nation' of the Lugdunenses, i.e. to the province of Lugdunensis.³⁰ Such details may have been necessary for

²³ Amm. xxxi 6.3-4; 15.15; any display to the contrary has always been connected with the presence of Roman defectors in the barbarian camps. When helped by these renegades, the capacity of the third-century German invaders to pick up imperial military and naval technology was not unimpressive, as Dexippus shows.

²⁴ Schöne, *MH* (see n. 4) calculated that fol. 16-17 was followed by fols. 96-103.

²⁵ Jullian *Histoire*, vii 44, n. 7.

²⁶ *HA Tyr. Trig.* 3.4, if indeed the author is trustworthy on this point. J. Lander, *Roman stone fortifications (BAR IS ccvi, [1984])* 151 f., on the lack of real evidence even for the presumed fortifications of Probus.

²⁷ Drinkwater, *Gallic empire* 85.

²⁸ M. Rouche, 'Le changement de nom de chefs-lieux de cité en Gaule au Bas-Empire', *Mém. de la soc. des antiquaires de France* iv (1968) 47-64. Cf. Ptolemy ii.8.11 (the Turonii and their polis, Caesarodunum). LSJ s.v. 'ἔθνος' I.2.c.

²³ Reinach, *op. cit.*, and E. Demougeot, *La formation de l'Europe et les invasions barbares i* (Paris 1969) 500-503 for 258 AD; C. Jullian, *Histoire de la Gaule iv* (Paris 1926) 595 n. 3; 601 n. 2; vii, 44 n. 7, for the Frankish raids of 275/6 and a power struggle between Florian and Probus. He is supported by L. Pietri, *La ville de Tours du IV au VI siècle: naissance d'une cité chrétienne* (Rome 1983) 10 n. 9, adducing archaeological finds such as the sudden cessation of local pottery production and a layer of ashes. I. König, *Die gallischen Usurpatoren von Postumus bis Tetricus* (München 1981), 81 n. 26, also for a date during the reign of Probus, on the basis of Eusebius' reference to walls. J. F. Drinkwater, *The Gallic empire* (Stuttgart 1987) 84-5 connects Eusebius' siege with a reference in Gregory of Tours, *HF* i32, 34, to a Frankish raid during the reign of Valerian and Gallienus (253-8).

²⁴ *Année Epigr.* 1928, 38 (Saldae) with Millar, *op. cit.*, 29.

an audience unfamiliar with Gaul and with the west on the whole, just as Ammianus digressed on artillery for the benefit of the *ignorantes* (xxiii 4.1). A Gallic audience would hardly have needed the information but a Greek audience in the east, appreciative of the effort to imitate Herodotus, and interested in events in the Latin west, was certainly in need of some geographical detail, particularly in view of the possible confusion between Gaul and Galatia. It is worth noting that Eusebius is also careful to locate the invading 'Celts' beyond the Rhine, possibly also to distinguish them from the eastern Celts (of Galatia).

Above all, Eusebius' narrative stands in marked contrast to other surviving accounts of the barbarian invasions of the third century. He is the only author to have included a reference to events in the west. One may assume that he would have had good first-hand knowledge of such events. The possibility, therefore, that he was writing in Gaul, as an eye-witness of the events described, must be considered. Who was this hellenized historian from Gaul?

In 1971 R. Weiss published a title list, taken from a fourteenth century manuscript in Ravenna, of works by Ausonius of Bordeaux, the most famous Gallic poet of the fourth century.³¹ Over half of these titles have long been known. The most interesting part supplies the names of lost works. They reveal Ausonius' interest in near-contemporary history as well as in subjects like the Hebrew and the Greek calendars. One of the titles reads: *De imperatoribus res novas molitis a Decio usque ad Diocletianum versus iambico trimetro iuxta libros Eusebii Nannetici ystorici*. In other words, a versified Roman history of the second part of the third century (between 250 and 284), with an emphasis on usurpations, most likely those of the *Imperium Galliarum*.

There is no reason to doubt the authenticity of this title.³² In all likelihood, this work formed a continuation of Ausonius' previous work on the Roman emperors from Augustus to Elagabalus (the *Caesares*). Perhaps the *Caesares* once concluded with Decius and not with Elagabalus, as it stands at present.³³ In the brief versified biographies of the first twelve emperors of Rome, Ausonius used Suetonius.³⁴ It has been suggested that his source for the rest of the surviving biographies (Nerva to Elagabalus) was Marius Maximus.³⁵ Be that as it may, his source for the work on emperors and usurpers between Decius and Diocletian was an otherwise unknown historian by the name of Eusebius of Nantes.

Both the name and the dates correspond to those of

the author of the sieges of Thessalonike and Tours. Although Eusebius is not an uncommon name, the coincidence between the name, the profession and the subject matter of Ausonius' Eusebius and the hellenizing historian of the later third century is striking. The two Eusebii must be identified as the historian Eusebius of Nantes.³⁶

Now, Nantes of course is not far from Tours, and Eusebius could have easily learnt about the siege of the city at first hand or from eye witnesses. His precision regarding the location of the place is now easily accounted for. That his history could have served as raw material for a verse account of the Gallic empire is interesting but hardly revealing. Ausonius had the ability to condense lengthy and entertaining biographies into a few dry verses.

What can be surmised about the scope, the nature and the underlying themes of Eusebius' historical work from its surviving portions? He composed an imperial history narrower in scope than that of his contemporary Dexippus and his predecessor Cassius Dio. Both harked back to mythical times in their respective histories. Eusebius covered a period of some three hundred years, from Augustus to Carus, in nine books. Perhaps then, each book covered about thirty-five years, though we cannot overlook the possibility that more recent events received a more detailed coverage.

More problematic is the nature of his work. Was it a continuous historical narrative, centering on the various reigns, or rather a Poliorketika? That the author had a marked interest in siege tactics is clear. But one can argue that this was a common aspect of the historiography of the late third century, as Dexippus' surviving works confirm. Both Eusebius and Dexippus give pride of place to local resistance to invasions and to the various strategies employed in the course of such resistance. I would tend to regard Eusebius' work as an imperial history arranged along chronological lines, which allowed a reader like Ausonius an easy extrapolation into an abbreviated sequence of imperial reigns.

While no decisive proof can be offered the idea of such a history would fit exactly into the third century Greek historiography as represented by Dexippus.

The information included in the two surviving fragments of Eusebius pertains to both eastern and western events. If he was a Gaul, the question of the focus of his narrative must be asked. With Dexippus as his source, at least for events in the east, the assumption can be made that Eusebius' account also centered on the east, which formed (along with the Danube) the most important area of imperial activity in the third quarter of the third century. But one may also assume a Gallic bias that favoured frequent western excursions, if not a wholly western orientation. But whether Eusebius' account of western events was subsidiary or the main theme of his historical narrative, remains an unanswered query.

That a man living in Gaul ventured to write a history

³⁰ M. Rouche, 'Le changement de nom de chefs-lieux de cité en Gaule au Bas-Empire', *Mém. de la soc. des antiquaires de France* iv (1968) 47-64. Cf. Ptolemy ii.8.11 (the Turonii and their polis, Caesarodunum). LSJ s.v. 'ἔθνος' I.2.c.

³¹ R. Weiss, 'Ausonius in the fourteenth century', in *Classical influences on European culture AD 500-1500*, ed. R. R. Bolgar (Cambridge 1971) 67-72. The list appears also in Prete's edition of Ausonius' works (Leipzig 1978) xxvi.

³² M. D. Reeve, 'Some manuscripts of Ausonius', *Prometheus* iii (1977) 112-120, esp. 119: 'a genuine work of Ausonius'.

³³ *Ibid.* 120.

³⁴ As the title indicates: *de XII caesaribus per Suetonium Tranquillum scriptis*.

³⁵ R. P. H. Green, 'Marius Maximus and Ausonius' *Caesares*', *CQ* xxxi (1981) 226-36, for summary of this opinion which he justly opposes.

³⁶ There is a slight and insignificant discrepancy between the end of Eusebius' history according to Evagrius (death of Carus in July 283) and its terminus in the Ausonian version (accession of Diocletian in November 284). The dynasty of Carus came to an end only in July 285, with the death of Carinus, Carus' son and successor.

of the Roman empire (or emperors) in Greek need hardly occasion comment. In fact, from the first century onward Roman history had become the exclusive domain of Greek historians. All the (surviving) histories which were composed in the course of the third century were written in Greek, presumably for a Greek audience in the first place, but also for a western public familiar with the language. The presence of such a public in the west seems clear from the fact that nearly all the third century fragments attributed to Dexippus, for example, come from the *Historia Augusta*.³⁷

It is further possible to envisage Eusebius either as one who elected to write in a language which was not his mother tongue, or as a Greek who settled in Gaul. There are precedents for both possibilities. In the first case, the best-known example is Favorinus of Arles (second century) who wrote in Greek many works, including some of an historical character, although his mother tongue was Latin.³⁸ In the second, a contemporary of Eusebius, Eumenius of Autun, was the grandson of a Greek orator who had first taught in Rome and then settled in Gallic Autun.³⁹ In fact, we know of a number of Greek or 'Syrian' communities in Gaul throughout the imperial centuries, and some of the Greek settlers were literate enough to embark on literary compositions in their original tongue.⁴⁰ It is not unlikely that Ausonius himself belonged, on his father's side, to a family which originated in the Greek east and immigrated to Gaul some time in the course of the third century.⁴¹

One more link connects Ausonius with the historian Eusebius (of Nantes). In his *Parentalia*, a series of poems commemorating dead relatives, Ausonius refers to a Eusebius as an ancestor of Veria Liceria, the wife of Ausonius' nephew.⁴² Ausonius' words further imply already made the connection between Evagrius' Eusebius and that had Eusebius still been living, he would have been able to commemorate his great-granddaughter himself. Such a reference, both to a specific ancestor and to his literary talent, is exceptional. Nowhere else in this work does Ausonius mention any ancestor, erudite or ignorant, of any of those commemorated. So with this unusual acknowledgement Ausonius discharged a double debt, as a relative of the dead Eusebius, and as his imitator.

In sum, the importance of placing the work of Eusebius within a western context cannot be exaggerated. It shows that the tradition of Greek historiography was carried on in the west, with a possible emphasis on western events. When the tradition of Latin historiography was finally resumed by Ammianus in the late fourth century, the Greek-speaking historian was composing in Latin for a western audience.

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³⁷ Millar, *op. cit.*, 23.

³⁸ Aulus Gellius, *NA* xx 1.20; *PW* vi.2 (1909), 2078f.

³⁹ *Pan. Lat.* v 17 3-4.

⁴⁰ Leclercq in *DACL* iii 2.2273 f. for Gaul (colonies d'orientaux en occident).

⁴¹ *Epicedion in patrem* 9-10: 'sermone impromptus Latio, verum Attica lingua/ suffecit culti vocibus eloquii'.

⁴² *Par.* 16. 5ff.: 'nunc laudanda forent (Liceria's virtues)

procul et de manibus imis/ aressenda esset vox proavi Eusebii./ qui quoniam functo iam pridem conditus aevo/ transcripsit partes in mea verba suas...' Green, *CQ* xxxi (1981) 230, has the Eusebius of Ausonius, but not between these testimonies and the fragments here discussed.

'Bloom of Youth': a labelled Syro-Palestinian unguent jar

The inscribed miniature jar shown in the photograph (PLATE VI (c)) and drawing FIG. 1) is part of a collection of artifacts purchased many years ago in Palestine that was recently donated to Ashland University in Ohio (United States) by Professor and Mrs. Delbert H. Flora.¹ Only 5.2 cm. in height and 5.5 cm. in diameter, the vessel has a biconical, wheelmade body and a string-cut base. The ware, which appears to be Syro-Palestinian, is moderately well levigated and fired light brown.² Inclusions, so far as they can be discerned, consist predominantly of quartz and chert particles in various sizes, both angular and round, as well as of some small limestone and unidentified rock fragments. The upper portion of the exterior and the interior of the rim display remnants of a dark brownish-black slip imitating black gloss ('glaze'); in places where it was thinly applied, the slip has become pale brown or has disappeared entirely. The vessel stands firmly within the international tradition that dominated pottery of the eastern Mediterranean region during the Late Hellenistic and Early Roman periods.³ Similar specimens, though not necessarily made in the same potter's shop, have been found at such diverse places as Tarsus, Dor, Jerusalem and Masada.⁴ The form and ware indicate a date in the second or first century BC with a possible extension into the early first century AD.

¹ I am indebted to Dr. and Mrs. Flora for permission to study this vessel prior to its donation to Ashland University. I also wish to express my appreciation to Herbert S. Long, Charlotte R. Long, Frank L. Koucky, Ruth E. Palmer and Ingrid Ebner for assistance rendered at various stages of my research.

² The fact that the jar was purchased in Jerusalem does not necessarily warrant the conclusion that it had its provenance in that city or its vicinity, since in modern times antiquities have sometimes been taken from southern Syria to Jerusalem because of the relatively strong market there.

³ Miniature pots, with or without handles, were extremely popular during these periods, both as trade items and as local fabrications at many sites. Some sense of the remarkable variety of shapes and wares that such vessels could have at a site can be gotten from the types excavated at Seleucia on the Tigris (N. C. Debevoise, *Parthian pottery from Seleucia on the Tigris* [Ann Arbor, Michigan 1934], Figs. 38-56, 58-59, 63-71, 75-76, 239, 241-245, 251-253, 264-265, 273, 307-316, 319-322, 324, 326-328, 330 and 337).

⁴ M. Hershkovitz has compiled a corpus of small Palestinian jars of the Hellenistic-Roman period ('Miniature ointment vases from the Second Temple period', *Israel Exploration Journal* xxxvi [1986] 45-51). She groups the specimens into four types and notes comparative materials from elsewhere in the eastern Mediterranean region. The vessel under discussion here is of her Type B, a distinctive and infrequent form which is described as having well-levigated pink to buff ware, a biconical body 4-5 cm. high, a wide mouth, a rim ranging from vertical to everted, and a brownish-red slip on the upper body and interior of the mouth. Handles are not present.