

# Maximinus, “that terrible Pannonian”

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*The author in his paper deals with the career of the Pannonian Maximinus under Valentinian’s rule. Based on Ammianus’ account his story is well-documented and it exactly shows how Pannonians backed by their fellow-patriots, Valentinian and Valens raised to power under their reign and how fast they disappeared after 375. Examining the debate on the existence of the Pannonian ‘party’, the author came to the conclusion that (as an antique commentary remarks it too) it can be called “factio” in a Roman sense too.*

**Key words:** Late Antique Rome, Pannonia, late antique magic, Valentinian

**A**mong the many events covered in detail in Ammianus’ historical work, one which he considered to have been of outstanding importance is the series of sorcery trials held in Rome in the early 370s (369–371/374) during Valentinian’s reign, whose main protagonist was a certain Flavius Maximinus of Pannonia (Amm. XXVIII.1–57).<sup>1</sup> Here, I shall discuss Ammianus’ portrait of Maximinus, a native of Sopiana, whom Sir Ronald Syme, the other most influential scholar of Antiquity beside András Alföldi in the early 20th century, simply called “that terrible Pannonian”.<sup>2</sup> I shall also briefly examine the individual Pannonians and Illyricans who rose to high rank in the imperial court(s) and in imperial bureaucracy as well as the evidence for their possible *factio*.

Everything we know about Maximinus practically comes from Ammianus’ work since his name barely crops up in other sources and neither is he mentioned in any inscriptions. The information conveyed by Ammianus in his narrative and the date of issue of several imperial edicts addressed to Maximinus outline the career of one of the most prominent sons of Roman-period Sopiana, who undoubtedly rose to the highest official rank from this town:<sup>3</sup>

XXVIII.1.5. Maximinus was born in Sopiana. His father, who worked as a *tabularius* in the governor’s office, was of Carpic stock, and thus his ancestors (his grandparents) had no doubt been *coloni*, while his father had attained this official rank (of which there were only two in the province) as a Roman citizen: *apud Sopianas Valeriae oppidum obscurissime natus est, patre tabulario praesidialis officii, orto a posteritate*

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<sup>1</sup> Ammianus XXVIII, 1–116.

<sup>2</sup> Syme 1968: 31. A. Alföldi and J. Matthews called him an “evil genius”: Alföldi 1952: 135; Matthews 1989: 210; Cf. Demandt 1969: 615: “ein brutaler Hexenrichter”; Errington 1996: 446: “a much-hated man”; Raimondi 2001: 143: “esecratissimo”.

<sup>3</sup> PWRE Suppl. V (1931) 663–664; PLRE I, Maximinus 7, 577–578; Lengvári 1996; Chastagnol 1960: 430–432; 464–466; Szidat 1995: 481–486; Barnes 1998: 241–246, Appendix 9; Lizzi Testa 2004: 50–51, Appendice 1; Coşkun 2003a.

*Carporum*. His *gentilicium*, Flavius, quite certainly suggests a family that had risen to prominence but recently (CIL X 8026=AÉp 2009, 451).<sup>4</sup>

XXVIII.1.6. Following a modicum of education in rhetorics, Maximinus became a defensive lawyer (*advocatus*) in insignificant affairs: *post mediocre studium liberalium doctrinarum defensionemque causarum ignobilem*. This seems to be a strong understatement since more recent studies have pointed out that only by his versatile handling of these affairs could he have drawn the attention of Valentinian, the Pannonian ruler (Szida 1995: 481–486.).

364/365 *Praeses Corsicae et Sardiniae*: before 366, cf. AÉp 1889: 32, Coll. Avell. 12.3.

366 *Corrector Tusciae*: cf. Cod. Theod. IX.1.8, November 17, 366.

368/370 *Praefectus annonae*: until March 370 by all calculations, cf. Cod. Theod. XIV.17.6, Hier. Chron. 246b Helm,<sup>5</sup> Ruf. H. E. 11.10,<sup>6</sup> Socr. H. E. IV.29.6.<sup>7</sup>

*administratas Corsicam itidemque Sardiniam, rexit deinde Tusciam. unde morato in itinere diutius successore, progressus ad curandam urbis annonam, etiam provinciae moderamina retinebat ...*

370/371 (?) *Vicarius*. Amm. XXVIII.1.5, 12. In the wake of the trials he had successfully conducted (XXVIII.1.9–10), Maximinus became *vicarius urbis: regens quondam Romae vicariam praefecturam; Romae agere disposito pro praefectis*. Following O. Seeck (Seeck 1919: 240, 242.), this is dated to 370–371 on the basis of two imperial decrees issued in summer 371 (Cod. Iust. VI.22.7, XI.48.7), which were addressed to Maximinus (which was probably corrected from Maximus to Maximinus), in which he is allegedly styled *praef. praet.* However, the rank of the addressee does not appear, and thus Maximinus may still have served as *vicarius* at the time (cf. Coll. Avell. 11–12=CSEL 35 (1895) 48–54).<sup>8</sup>

371?–376 XXVIII.1.41. Following his services in Rome, regarded as highly effective by Valentinian, Maximinus became *praefectus praetorio Galliarum: Post haec praegresso Leone acceptoque successore ad principis comitatum Maximinus accitus, auctusque praefectura praetoriana*.

XXIX.3.1–9. Maximinus' activities in Gaul and his bad influence on Valentinian, leading to a series of executions.

XXVIII.1.57. Shortly after Valentinian's death, Maximinus and his friends met their fate: Gratian had Maximinus beheaded: *namque ut postea tempestive dicetur, et idem Maximinus sub Gratiano intoleranter se efferens damnatorio iugulatus est ferro*. Although Ammianus promises that he would later take up this thread, he did not provide his readers with a detailed account of the events (only in two cases did he fail to live up to his promise). The reason for this omission was not only that he was reluctant to cover the events in detail owing to the far too recent death of the elder Theodosius – he also neglected a continuous account of the events in the west after 375.<sup>9</sup>

Maximinus' downfall can be dated to 376: in March, he was quite certainly still in office (Cod. Theod. IX.6.1–2),<sup>10</sup> although his demise cannot have been far, given that both decrees limited his powers as prosecutor by decreeing that the testimonies of slaves and *liberti* against their former master should no longer be taken into consideration.<sup>11</sup> It is hardly mere chance that another decree addressed to Maximinus issued at

<sup>4</sup> Mócsy 1964: 258–261.

<sup>5</sup> *Maximinus praefectus annonae maleficos ab imperatore investigare iussus, plurimos Romae nobilium occidit.*

<sup>6</sup> *Quae res factione Maximini praefecti saevi hominis, ad invidiam boni et innocentis versa est sacerdotis, ita ut caussa ad clericorum usque tormenta deduceretur. Sed assertor innocentiae Deus affuit, et in caput eorum qui intenderant dolum, poena conversa est.*

<sup>7</sup> ... καὶ διὰ τοῦτο πολλοὺς λαικοὺς τε καὶ κληρικοὺς ὑπὸ τοῦ τότε ἐπάρχου Μαξιμίνου τιμωρηθῆναι..

<sup>8</sup> Barnes 1998: 241–242.

<sup>9</sup> Matthews 1989: 211, 216, 382, 511. n. 14; Barnes 1998: 246. Even so, I believe that there is much to be learnt from E. A. Thompson's arguments on Ammianus' silence (Thompson 1947: 92–95), particularly in the light of the following passage on Maximinus: XXIX.3.1. *igitur dicta considerat, perpendat etiam cetera, quae tacentur, veniam daturus ut prudens, si non cuncta complectimur, quae consiliorum pravitas crimina in maius exaggerando commisit.*

<sup>10</sup> The date of April 16 for Cod. Theod. IX.19.4 is not the date of the decree's issue, but the date when it was proclaimed in Rome, meaning that it could have been written before March 15: cf. Barnes 1998: 246, n. 13.

<sup>11</sup> Cod. Theod. IX.6.1. *Imppp. valens, gratianus et valentinianus aaa. ad maximum praefectum praetorio. cessent liberti capitalium criminum tumultu et nefariae delationis indiciis auctores libertatis incessere, ita ut tam nefandos conatus ferri aut ignium poena compescat. proposita id. mart. valente v et valentiniano aa. cons. (376 mart. 15).*

this time (Cod. Theod. IX.19.4) also deals with the matter of handling false charges.<sup>12</sup> His successor is first mentioned in May 376 (Cod. Theod. XIII.3.1: May 23, 376), meaning that Maximinus’ death occurred at an earlier date.

Symmachus and his followers were no doubt delighted to hear of his death, but other sources also deemed it important enough to record the event (Vera 1981: 452–453.):

Symmachus’ letter addressed to Gratian (Symm. Ep. 10.2.2–3): *ferox ille Maximinus ob res secundas, incubator iudiciorum, difficilis decidendis simultatibus, promptus ineundis, poena capitali exitia cunctorum lacrimasque expiavit.*

Symmachus’ panegyric to Gratian (Pro patre; Or. IV.11–12): *Quid primum igitur admirer, quod circa divum munus pii filii an quod circa nos partes parentis egisti? alienorum simulatione criminum Maximinus fidem fecit suorum. vestra aestimatio sit, qualis fuerit in ceteros, quem ipsi rerum domini tyrannum paene estis experti. urgebat enim novo fastu patientiam regiam et praefecturae suae putabat esse dispendium, si quid licuisset imperio.*

Pannonia studies generally focus on three issues in relation to Ammianus’ narrative on Maximinus:

(1) XXVIII.1.5 would suggest that Carpi were settled in eastern Pannonia during the Tetrarchy. Ammianus’ claim is echoed by other sources too (Chron. Min. I. p. 234=Cons Const. ad ann. 295; Aur. Vict. 39.43; Eutr. IX.25). Possible traces of the Carpi in the archaeological record have been identified by E. Tóth, who found cremation burials dating from this period inside the late Roman fort at Alsóheténypuszta.<sup>13</sup>

(2) Based on the same passage, it is also generally accepted that the seat of the *praeses*, and of the civilian administration of the province of Valeria, was in Sopianae during the late Roman period because Maximinus was born in that town and his father was *tabularius praesidialis officii*, i.e. he served as a *tabularius* in the office of the *praeses*.<sup>14</sup>

Cod. Theod. IX.6.2 [=brev.9.3.1]. *Imppp. valens, grat. et valent. aaa. ad maximum pf. p. quum accusatores servi dominis intonent, nemo iudiciorum exspectet eventum, nihil quaeri, nihil discuti placet, sed cum ipsis delationum libellis, cum omni scripturarum et meditati criminis apparatu nefandarum accusationum cremantur auctores, excepto tamen appetitae maiestatis crimine, in quo etiam servis honesta proditio est: nam et hoc facinus tendit in dominos. dat. id. mart. valente v. et valentin. aa. coss.*

*interpretatio. servus dominum accusans non solum audiendus non est, verum etiam puniendus, nisi forte dominum de crimine maiestatis tractasse probaverit.*

<sup>12</sup> Cod. Theod. IX.19.4.1 [=brev.9.15.2.1]. *Quod si expetens vindictam falsi crimen intenderit, erit in arbitrio iudicantis, an eum sinat etiam sine inscriptione certare. iudicis enim potestati committi oportet, ut de eo, qui obiecta non probaverit, sumat propositum antiquo iure supplicium. rationi quoque huius modi plenissime suffragatur antiquitas, quae nequissimos homines et argui voluit et coerceri legibus variis, cornelia de veneficiis, sicariis, parricidiis, iulia de adulteris ambitusve criminibus, ceterisque ita promulgatis, ut possit etiam sine inscriptione cognosci, poena tamen accusatorem etiam sine solennibus occuparet. de qua re et divus antoninus rescripsisse docetur, id in iudicis potestate constituens, quod nosmet in legibus iusseramus. removebitur itaque istius lenitate rescripti praecepti superioris austeritas, ut, si quis deinceps tabulas testamenti, chirographa testationesque, nec non etiam rationes privatas vel publicas, pacta et epistolas vel ultimas voluntates, donationes, venditiones vel si quid prolatum aliud insimulare conabitur, habeat, praetermissis solennibus, accusandi facultatem, pro iudicis motu sententiam relaturus.*

Cod. Theod. IX.19.4.2 [=brev.9.15.2.2]. *Civiles autem inquisitiones inter utrasque confligentium partes aequali motu ingruit et recurrit humanitas, quum is, qui praeerit quaestioni, intentiones falsas aut conficta crimina ex legibus poenis competentibus possit ulcisci. pp. romae xvi. kal. mai., valente v. et valentin. aa. coss.*

*interpretatio. de falso potest et criminaliter et civiliter agi. civiliter, quum aliquis quibuslibet scripturis non falsi crimen obiecerit, sed veritatem scripturae se velle quaerere dicit. nam si ad iudicem venerit accusator, et falsi crimen intenderit, iudex tribuat accusatori spatium, ut deliberet, utrum criminaliter agere an civiliter velit. qui si reversus ad iudicem in obiecto falsitatis crimine perseveraverit, in potestate iudicis erit, utrum inscriptionem celebrari velit, an obiectum crimen sine inscriptione discutere. quod quum iudex de obiectione falsitatis audierit, seu inscriptione habita seu omissa, aut in accusatum, si falsitas approbatur, aut in accusatorem, si falso obiecerit, proferatur, ex lege sententia.*

<sup>13</sup> Fülep 1984: 268, 274; Nagy 1987–1988: 240–241; Tóth 2005: 363–391; Kovács 2016: 1–6.

<sup>14</sup> PWRE Suppl. IX (1962) 611; Mócsy 1974: 273; Fülep 1984: 268, 274; Nagy 1987–1988: 240–241; Fitz 1993–1995, 1180–1181; Tóth 2006: 49–102.

(3) The perhaps greatest crisis in Pannonia under Valentinian's reign can, even if only indirectly, be associated with Maximinus. In 373, Maximinus had his own son Marcellinus appointed the military commander of Valeria (PLRE, Marcellianus 2, 543–544; Fitz 1993–1995: 1272–1273, Nr. 911), who continued the construction of forts in Quadic lands as ordered by Valentinian (XXIX.6.2) and he also had Gabinius, the Quadic king, treacherously murdered after inviting him to a feast (XXIX.6.3–5, cf. Zos. IV.16.4). The enraged Quadi joined forces with the Sarmatians and led a devastating incursion into Pannonia the next year (XXIX.6.6–16, Zos. IV.16.4). It seems likely that the murder cannot be solely blamed on the young *dux* because Ammianus notes that the Quadi held the *equitus magister* responsible for the murder (XXIX.6.12). One of the semi-finished forts can perhaps be identified with the remains recently uncovered at Göd, where an apparently never completed large fort with oval ground plan has been brought to light (Mráv 2003; 2005). It is an eloquent mark of Maximinus' influence that his son went unpunished after the affair (XXIX.5.3), while the punitive expedition against the Quadi was led by the emperor himself, who died in Brigetio in 375 (he suffered a stroke while receiving the Quadic envoys; XXIX.5–6).

Here, I shall explore another, similarly intriguing issue: to what extent can the rise of Maximinus and his followers be attributed to the rule of emperors of Pannonian stock (Valentinian, Valens and, from 368, Gratian), and whether we can speak of a Pannonian clan. In doing so, we must also briefly address the question of to what extent Ammianus' portrayal can be regarded as reliable.

The authors of Antiquity did not mince their words and spared no disparaging similes when speaking of Maximinus:

Ammianus Marcellinus:

XXVIII.1.5. *apud Sopianas Valeriae oppidum obscurissime natus est*

XXVIII.1.6. *post ... defensionemque caesarum ignobilem*

XXVIII.1.7. *subterraneus serpens*

XXVIII.1.10. *accepta igitur nocendi materia Maximinus effudit genuinam ferociam pectori crudo adfixam, ut saepe faciunt amphitheatrales ferae, diffractis tandem solutae posticis*

XXVIII.1.13. *ingenium ad laedendum*

*ideoque pedes huc et illuc exultando contorquens, saltare, non incedere videbatur, dum studebat inter altaria celsius gradientes, ut quidam memorant, imitari Brachmanas*

XXVIII.1.15. *praeter multa cruda et inmitia, quorum nec diversitas comprehendere nec numerus potest*

XXVIII.1.31. *anhelans flatu superbo Maximinus*

XXVIII.1.33. *velut serpens vulnere noti cuiusdam adtritrus*

XXVIII.1.41. *nihilo lenior fuit etiam longius nocens ut basilisci serpentes*

XXVIII.1.51. *agensque ibi Maximinus infestus ob causam, quam supra docuimus, Aginatio male sanus incitator et potens*

XXVIII.1.57. *idem Maximinus sub Gratiano intoleranter se efferens*

XXVIII.3.4. *exitialis vicarius*

XXIX.2.23. *Maximinum optimo cuique exitialem*

XXIX.3.1. *potestate late diffusa scaevum imperatori accesserat incentivum*

XXIX.6.3. *Maximinus in omne avidus nefas et genuinos mitigare nequens flatus, quibus praefecturae accesserat tumor*

Rufinus:

H. E. XI.10. *saevus homo*

Symmachus:

Ep. 10.2: *ferox ille Maximinus incubator iudiciorum*

Or. IV.10. *mali iudices qui etiam tum nocendi artem colebant, cum iam noverant non licere.*

IV.13. *abrogata est externis moribus vis nocendi.*

V.12. *insidiator regni*

Why was Maximinus cast in such a bad light? It would appear that this low opinion of him was an outcome of his activities as *praefectus* and *vicarius* in Rome when, on the orders of Valentinian, he brought

charges against countless high-ranking individuals as the deputy of the *vicarius urbi* (Amm. XXVIII.1.5–56) and he was responsible for the persecution and death of many women and men of senatorial rank.

Regarding the trials, it seems instructive to take a look at how many deaths, convictions and persecutions Ammianus attributes to Maximinus:<sup>15</sup>

Source	death penalty / suicide	exile	persecution
XXVIII.1.7	prophet from Sardinia		
Praefectus annonae			
			Sericus, Asbolius Campensis, <i>nobiles aliqui</i>
Hier. Chron. 246 b	<i>plurimi Romae nobilium</i>		
Mansi III 624, Ruf. H. E. XI.10, Socr. H. E. IV.29.6, Sozom. VI.23.2			Pope Damasus, <i>laici</i> and <i>clerici</i>
Vicarius			
XXVIII.1.14	advocate Marinus		
XXVIII.1.16	senator Cethegus, <i>aliique humiles</i>	Alypius	
XXVIII.1.17–23		Hymetius <i>procos.</i>	
XXVIII.1.21	Amantius <i>haruspex</i>	Frontinus <i>consiliarius</i>	
XXVIII.1.26	Lollianus		
XXVIII.1.27			the senators Tarracius Bassus, Camenius, Marcianus, Eusaphius
XXVIII.1.28	execution of women: Claritas and Flaviana		
XXVIII.1.29	senators Paphius and Cornelius, <i>procuratores monetae</i> , Sericus and Asbolius, <i>Campensis haruspex</i>		
XXIX.2.23	<i>optimus quisque</i>		
PPO Gall.			
XXVIII.1.30–34, 51–56	Aginatius		
XXVIII.1.54	Anepsia		
XXX.2.11–12	Remigius <i>mag. off.</i>		
Total	16 individuals and others	3 individuals	5 individuals

Ammianus accused him of indirect responsibility for the later trials in Rome:

XXVIII.1.43. *quae per iniquitatem curantium vicariam praefecturam* (sc. Ursinus és Simplicius) *in urbe contra quam oportuerat gesta sunt, quia ad nutum Maximini et voluntatem isdem ministris velut apparitoribus gerebantur.*

XXVIII.1.56. *haec agitante, cum adesset, perque emissarios cum procul ageret, Maximino funera urbs deploravit aeterna.*

Source	death penalty / suicide / exile	persecution / conviction
XXVIII.1.44		Esaias, <i>alii</i> , Rufina, Marcellus <i>agens in rebus</i>
XXVIII.1.47	Hesychia	
XXVIII.1.48–50		Fausiana, senators Eumenius, Abienus
Total	1 individual	6 individuals and others

<sup>15</sup> Blockley 1975: 189–190, Appendix E; Demandt 1969: 608.

Likewise, Ammianus indirectly blames Maximinus for the sufferings of those who had been convicted by Valentinian during his prefecture in Gaul:

XXIX.3.1–2. *multa et saeva Maximinum reperiens iam praefectum, qui potestate late diffusa scaevum imperatori accesserat incentivum, maiestati fortunae miscenti licentiam gravem ... post eiusdem Maximini adventum, nec meliora monente ullo nec retentante ...*

Source	death penalty	exile	persecution
XXIV.3.3	<i>paedagogiani</i>		
XXIV.3.4	<i>praepositus fabricae, presbyter</i> of Epirus		
XXVIII.3.5	Constantianus <i>strator</i> , Athanasius <i>auriga</i>		
XXVIII.3.6	Africanus		
XXVIII.3.7	Sallustius <i>tribunus</i>	Claudius <i>tribunus</i>	
XXVIII.3.8			unknown people owing to a lacuna in the text, praetorian guards
Total	6 individuals + <i>paedagogiani</i>	1 individual	several individuals

Modern scholarship has repeatedly discussed the trials held in Rome: one of the main issues is why Valentinian deemed it so important to lash out at the aristocracy of Rome – was it simply an assault against adultery and sorcery, or was there some sort of conspiracy behind the trials (as suggested by E. Thompson and others after him),<sup>16</sup> since it is fairly obvious that Maximinus acted on the emperor’s orders and with his consent (cf. Valentinian’s anger over Hymetius’ mild sentence and the futile journey of the Senate’s delegation to the emperor: Amm. XXVIII.1.23–25). Another issue giving rise to fierce debates is whether Maximinus’ rise to power was an isolated case or whether there was a group, a *factio*, of Pannonians in the court of emperor who had been born in Cibalae, who were strongly opposed to the élite of the west (main of Gaul) and of Rome, whose fate was sealed after Valentinian’s death and whose majority paid with their lives for their rise under Gratian.<sup>17</sup> The latter view was principally advocated by A. Alföldi and J. Matthews, while other scholars challenged the existence of a *factio* (an “Illyrian front”) of this type. The different scholarly opinions have been most comprehensively reviewed by N. Lenski, according to whom it was only natural that many Pannonians and Illyricans attained prominent positions with the rise of Valentinian, but this was not a mass phenomenon, especially not in the east (Lenski 2002: 60–62).

(1) Let us first look at the conspiracy theory. Several points emerge from the above:

(a) The *quaestiones* affected all groups of Rome, even if Ammianus only recorded the prosecution of more prominent individuals (cf. XXVIII.1.15).

(b) The charges against Pope Damasus and his followers were brought after bouts of violence and after Isaac, a follower of Ursinus, was charged with murder (Mansi III 624, Ruf. H. E. XI.10, Socr. H. E. IV.29.6, Sozom. VI.23.2).<sup>18</sup>

(c) The trials were not conducted according to a pre-determined scenario.

(d) In most cases, the defendants were charged with sorcery and adultery. It is not mere chance that Ammianus mentions that Maximinus’ father was well versed in these arts, and that according to the

<sup>16</sup> Thompson 1947: 102–107, 138–140; PWRE VII (1948) 2191–2192; Alföldi 1952: 65–84; Chastagnol 1960: 430; Barb 1963: 100–125; Seyfarth 1965: 373–383; Funke 1967: 170–175; Demandt 1969: 607–613; Blockley 1975: 104–122; Matthews 1975: 64–69; Hamblenne 1980: 198–225; Matthews 1989: 209–218; Mariè 1992: 349–360; CAH 13: 82–83; Barnes 1998: 241–246; Curran 2000: 200–203; Lenski 2002: 218–233; Coşkun 2000; Ammianus XXVIII, 1–116.

<sup>17</sup> PWRE VII (1948) 2191–2192; Alföldi 1952: 13–27; Schuurmans 1949: 25–38; Demandt 1969: 618–625; Tomlin 1973: 263–265; Matthews 1975: 32–55, esp. 43–49; Matthews 1989: 272; Barnes 1998: 108–109, 241–246; Raimondi 2001: 141–160; Lenski 2002: 56–67.

<sup>18</sup> Alföldi 1952: 80–83, 137–139; Coşkun 2003b.

historian, Maximinus' first victim was a prophet from Corsica (XXVIII.1.7) – what Ammianus alleges is that the official conducting the trials was himself guilty of this particular offence. Only once is there reference to high treason, in the case of Marcellus *agens in rebus* (XXVIII.1.44). Hymetius' invective claiming that the emperor was greedy and ruthless, quoted by Ammianus, is an indication of the anti-Valentinian sentiments in Rome (XXVIII.1.20. *invectiva legebantur in principem ut avarum et truculentum*).

(e) The convicted included members of the most distinguished families such as the Anicii (Aginatius, Alypius) and the Caeionii (Lollianus, Tarracius Bassus, Camenius).<sup>19</sup>

(f) Ammianus admits that Maximinus did not act with ruthlessness in every case (XXVIII.1.40).

(g) The emperor remitted the case of Hymetius to the senate (XXVIII.1.22–23), suggesting that it was not (or not just) a showcase trial. Neither did Valentinian alter Hymetius' mild sentence.

(h) The delegation of the senate sent to Valentinian spoke out against the *supplicia grandiora* and the torture of the senators (XXVIII.1.24). The delegation was partially successful for the emperor put an end to the torture of senators (Amm. XXVIII.1.25), and the trials against senators in matters of sorcery were relegated to the *praefectus urbi* and the competence of the emperor himself in a decree dated December 371 (Cod. Theod. IX.16.10).<sup>20</sup>

(i) One of the longest chapters in Ammianus' work covers the events in Rome (XXVIII.1.1–57), although the narrative itself is deliberately out of chronological order. The events recounted by him took place between 366 and 375;<sup>21</sup> however, while Maximinus was responsible only as *praefectus annonae* and *vicarius*, Ammianus blamed him for the trials conducted by his successors too.

(j) The single trial motivated by personal hatred was conducted against Aginatius – an affair that can be seen as an open rivalry between two officials, and the enmity was begun by his opponent (XXVIII.1.32). The wrangle over Victorinus' inheritance (XXVIII.1.35) seems more like one of Ammianus' customary derogatory remarks.

(k) Elsewhere, Ammianus himself describes the corruption of the population as well as of the leaders of Rome (XXVIII.4.6–34). Given the general atmosphere as described by him, the trials cannot have come as a surprise, and the single cause for Ammianus' resentment could only have been the scale of the punishments.

Thus, I see no particular reason for assuming any kind of conspiracy based on the available sources, nor do I see any substantiation of the oft-voiced claim that the proceedings can be regarded as mass trials.

(2) Regarding the issue of whether there was a Pannonian *factio* in the imperial court, we should first examine the circle of persons who by their ancestry could have been members of this assumed group.

What seems quite certain is that there were Pannonians around Valentinian from the very beginning, who had been elevated to higher positions on account of their trustworthiness and had been assigned to deal with particularly sensitive matters. This is how Maximinus replaced Olybrius instead of Aginatius, even though the latter was higher in rank (XXVIII.1.32). Equitius, still a tribunus at the time (PLRE, Equitius 2, 282), had a hand in the election of Valentinian, as did Leo<sup>22</sup> (Amm. XXVI.1.6), who supported the candidate to the throne *ut Pannonii* (PWRE VII (1948) 2161; Raimondi 2001: 63–71). The former was also a candidate for the imperial throne, but was eventually rejected because he was far too *asper et subagrestis* (XXVI.1.4). Viventius of Siscia<sup>23</sup> appears as *quaestor sacri palatii* and was immediately given the highly sensitive task of looking into the circumstances of Valentinian and Valens' illness (XXVI.4.4). At the time of Procopius' revolt, the military defence of Illyricum was entrusted to Equitius, who had to ensure that the revolt would not spread to the west (XXVI.5.10–11). Equitius proved quite capable and thus retained this position (*magister militum per Illyricum*) until 375, dealing with the task he was entrusted with until 374 (Amm.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Matthews 1975: 57–58.

<sup>20</sup> Pergami 1993: 562, 564.

<sup>21</sup> Thompson 1947: 138–140, Appendix II; Demandt 1969: 610; Barnes 1998: 241–246; Ammianus XXVIII, 1–116.

<sup>22</sup> PLRE, Leo 1, 498.

<sup>23</sup> PLRE, Viventius, 972.

XXVI.7.11–12, 10.4, XXIX.6.3, 12; *consul* in 374: XXX.3.1).<sup>24</sup> Equitius was present at Valentinian's death in 375, and he had a hand in Valentinian II's elevation to the purple (Epit. de Caes. 45.10, Zos. IV.19.1, solely Merobaudes: Amm. XXX.6.2, Probus: Ruf. H. E. XI.12. Cf. Socr. H. E. IV.31, Sozom. H. E. VI.36, Philos. IX.16). Old Serenianus, who had earlier partaken in Gallus' murder, was called back to service and remained one of Valens' most trusted men until his death; according to the commander of the *schola domesticorum*, he also came from Pannonia (XXVI.5.3. *ut Pannonius sociatusque Valenti*; cf. XIV.7.7, XIV.11.23, XXVI.5.3, XXVI.10.1–2).<sup>25</sup> His re-activation and the trust accorded to him was essentially because of his origins: XXVI.10.2. *ob similitudinem morum et genitalis patriae vicinitatem acceptus*. Petronius, Valens' father-in-law, was another Pannonian, who as a patrician founded a *factio* of his followers, for whom he ensured the highest posts: XXVI.7.4. *confestim Nebridius in locum Sallusti praefectus praetor io factione Petronii recens promotus* (PLRE, Petronius 3, 690–691). It is hardly surprising, then, that Ammianus painted a negative picture of the emperor's relative who spared no effort to put the empire's messy finances in order and ruthlessly collected tax debts, which made him a hated figure in the eyes of the people (XXVI.6.17); Ammianus portrayed him as a much more sinister figure than Cleander and Plautianus, the ill-famed *praefecti* appointed by Commodus and Septimius Severus (XXVI.6.7–9).<sup>26</sup> The eastern *factio* was not particularly long-lived since Serenianus lost his life in 365, during Procopius' rebellion (XXVI.10.1–2), and the much-hated Petronius' role was reduced to nought<sup>27</sup> after the rebellion was crushed (Lenski 2002: 60–62).

Leo and Viventius as well as other Pannonians appear in the account of the events in Rome. In 355, Viventius, as *praefectus urbi*, had to deal with the riots accompanying the election of the pope (Amm. XXVII.3.11–13). Unusually for Ammianus, he described the *praefectus* as *integer et prudens Pannonius*. Although he was unable to deal with the situation, he was soon appointed *praefectus praetorio Gall*. (XXX.5.11).

Valentinian appointed Leo, who had attained the rank of *notarius* (XXVIII.1.12), to assist Maximinus in the investigations. Ammianus paints an even more negative picture of him than of Maximinus, who had risen to the rank of *magister officiorum* (Amm. XXX.2.10, 5.12), although had set his sight on becoming *praefectus*. As a *notarius*, Leo used his influence to secure Maximinus' appointment as *praefectus*. It seems likely that the more lenient Ursicinus, Maximinus' first successor, was also of Illyrian stock (XXVIII.1.44: *ad mitiora propensior, qui quoniam cautus esse voluit et civilis*).<sup>28</sup> He was followed by Simplicius, a man from Emona, and thus from Pannonia/Illyricum in the broader sense, who in Ammianus' eyes was a "worthy" successor of Maximinus (XXVIII.1.45, 49, 52).<sup>29</sup> Simplicius, a former *grammaticus*, had been Maximinus' *consiliarius*. Simplicius was succeeded by Doryphorianus, who came not from Pannonia, but from Gaul, and who according to Ammianus, had quite clearly won this post as one of Maximinus' confidantes (XXVIII.1.53–55). He was the one who eventually brought about the execution of Aginatus and Anepsia. A native of Tridentium, a town on the border between Italy and Raetia, Festus (who is sometimes identified with the historian by the same name (Baldwin 1984: 79–99)) maintained good relations with Maximinus (XXIX.2.22. *in nexum germanitatis a Maximino dilectus ut sodalis et contogatus*), and is described by Ammianus as playing the same role in the east (governor of Syria, *magister memoriae, proconsularis* of Africa for six long years!) as Maximinus in Rome (XXIX.2.22–28).<sup>30</sup> Festus, who spoke no Greek (Lib. Or. I.156), conducted a series of similar trials as Maximinus. Little wonder, then, that the aristocrats of the east had a rather low opinion of him (e.g. Lib. Or. I.156, Eunap. V. S. 7.6.9–12).<sup>31</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Fitz 1993–1995: 1247–1249, Nr. 882.

<sup>25</sup> PLRE, Serenianus 2, 825.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. PWRE VII (1948) 2099–2100.

<sup>27</sup> Other Pannonians in Valens' court included another Equitius, Valens' relative (*propinquus*), who served as *tribunus* (and held the post of the *cura palatii*), and fell in the Battle of Hadrianapolis (Amm. XXXI.12.15, XXXI.13.18), and Procopius, also a relative of the emperor, the *praefectus urbi* of Constantinople in 377 (Zos. V.9.3–5): Lenski 2002: 60–61, n. 275, 282.

<sup>28</sup> Lenski 2002: 58, n. 264.

<sup>29</sup> PLRE, Simplicius 7, 844.

<sup>30</sup> PLRE, Festus 3, 334–335. His aide in Antiochia was a certain Fidelius, a compatriot of his: Lib. Or. I.163–165; Cf. Lenski 2002: 61, n. 287.

<sup>31</sup> Lenski 2002: 65–66, 233.



Mention must also be made of Valentinus, a native of Valeria, among the Pannonians who rose to a high rank and who can perhaps be identified with the *consularis* of Picenum (Cod. Theod. IX.1.8, November 17, 366). His downfall occurred while Valentinian was still alive: he was first exiled to Britain and was later executed for treason by the elder Theodosius (XXVIII.3.3–6, XXX.7.10, cf. Hier. Chron. 246c Helm, Zos. 4.12.2, Jord. Rom. 308),<sup>32</sup> although his exact crime remains unknown and the circumstance of his rebellion in Britain are rather curious. As Maximinus’ brother-in-law (XXVIII.3.4. *Maximini ... coniugis frater*), he was quite certainly a member of the group discussed here.

It is quite obvious from Ammianus’ account that being a member of this group was not a stake for the future and that Pannonians could fall from power just as easily. Suffice it here to mention the case of the councillors of the three towns who had Maxentius executed (XXVII.7.6), and the exile and eventual execution of Valentinus, Maxentius’ brother-in-law (XXVIII.3.3–6, XXX.7.10). One good illustration of how family members were elevated to high positions is Marcellinus, Maxentius’ son, who became *dux* of Valeria, and Faustinus, son of Viventius’ sister, who served as a *notarius* and was convicted and executed for a stupid joke and for using a potion against loss of hair (XXX.5.11–12).<sup>33</sup> Being someone’s relative or friend did not always count: following the death of Victorinus, his closest friends (XXVIII.1.27), Maxentius had his widow Anepsia executed because she had fallen into disrepute (XXVIII.1.49–50, 54–56), even though he made his son marry Victorinus’ stepdaughter in the hope of the inheritance (XXVIII.1.43–44).

The Pannonians’ good fortune waned following Valentinian’s death on November 17, 375. Gratian, who had been raised by Ausonius, soon appointed his own followers, as was customary with the ascension of a new emperor. The first to disappear from our sources was Equitius (Cf. Errington 1996: 441, 445, n. 49), whose later fate remains unknown, and it is possible that he simply retired. His crime, if any, could only have been that he and his followers had orchestrated Valentinian II’s election without the approval of Valens and Gratian, which had quite certainly displeased the emperors (Socr. H. E. IV.31, Sozom. H. E. VI.36.5).<sup>34</sup> Whatever happened to him, we know from Philostorgios that Gratian saw to it that some were punished for the election without his knowledge (cf. Philos. IX. Frag.16. Γρατιανὸς μέντοι γε τὴν ἀναγόρευσιν μαθὼν, ὅτι μὴ διὰ γνώμης αὐτοῦ γέγονεν, οὐκ ἐπήνεσεν· ἀλλὰ καὶ τινὰς τῶν αὐτοῦ νεωτερισάντων ἐκολάσατο. ὅμως ἔστειρε τὸν ἀδελφὸν ἔχειν βασιλεύοντα, καὶ πατὴρ αὐτῶ τάξις ἀποπληροῦν). The positive gestures towards the senate and the events of the ensuing few months are recounted most vividly by Symmachus. The first sign of a more lenient policy was Gratian’s *oratio* read in the senate (Symm. Ep. I.13, cf. Or. V), which was followed by an amnesty (Symmachus’ father was also allowed to return: Ep. I.44, cf. also Amm. XXIX.3.7, Ambros. De obitu Theod. 52, Aus. Grat. Act. 15.71, Them. Or. 13.171c, 174b, 175a, 177a–c)<sup>35</sup> and imperial decrees mostly addressed to Maximinus that made the prosecution of senators more difficult (Cod. Theod. IX.6.1–2, IX.19.4).<sup>36</sup> Concessions made to the senatorial order continued until January 377, when a new decree forbade the torture of senators (Cod. Theod. IX.35.3=J 12.10: January 4, 377), their greatest grievance in relation to the trials (Lenski 2002: 232, n. 121). The emperor visited Rome in summer 376 (cf. Them. Or. XIII),<sup>37</sup> after which the men maltreated in the trials led by Maximinus could return and were appointed to high positions: for example, Tarracius Bassus became *praefectus urbi*, Kamenius was appointed *vicarius* of Africa and Hymetius returned from his exile in Dalmatia (cf. CIL VI 1736=ILS 1256).<sup>38</sup>

The most obscure event of the year 376 was the execution of the elder Theodosius and his followers (Hier.: *plurimi nobilium*; Hier. Chron. 248c Helm, Oros. 7.33.7, Jord. Rom. 312), who had successfully put down Firmus’ revolt in Africa (Amm. XXIX. 5); as a matter of fact, Theodosius’ son, the later emperor, had barely escaped being put to death himself (Ambr. De obitu Theod. 53, Theod. H. E. V.5.1).<sup>39</sup> The following

<sup>32</sup> PLRE, Valentinus 5, 935; Matthews 1975: 38, n. 6; but cf. Lenski 2002: 58, n. 266.

<sup>33</sup> Clauss 1985: 97–98.

<sup>34</sup> Szidat 1989: 175–188. Probus, the *praefectus praetorio* of Illyricum, who had similarly had a hand in the election, disappeared for some time after 375, and only held this post again after 383: Fitz 1993–1995: 1215–1219, Nr. 852, Kovács 2019: 199–208.

<sup>35</sup> Alföldi 1952: 88, n. 5.

<sup>36</sup> Alföldi 1952: 84–95; Matthews 1975: 64–68.

<sup>37</sup> Seeck 1919: 248.

<sup>38</sup> Matthews 1975: 65–66.

<sup>39</sup> Egger 1929–1930: 9–32 = 1967: 126–143; Hoepffner 1936: 119–129; Thompson 1947: 87–107, esp. 93–94, 138–140; Alföldi 1952: 91–92; Demandt 1969; Matthews 1975: 64, 93–94; Errington 1996: 443–447.

remark appears in relation to the elder Theodosius' death in a gloss to Hieronymus' *Chronicon* (Codd. C and X) for the year 376 (248c Helm), which, even if not written by Hieronymus,<sup>40</sup> was undoubtedly the work of a barely later contemporary and can therefore be regarded as being reliable (Demandt 1969: 599, 617–618; Errington 1996: 446, n. 52): *Theodosius ... factione eorum periit qui ipsi mox caesi sunt, id est Maximini ex praefecto et ceteri* (Chron. Min. I. p. 631), implying that the author of the gloss laid the blame for the *comes*' death on Maximinus and his group. If this was indeed the case, his execution could only have taken place while the latter were still alive, in early 376. It is hardly mere chance that Ammianus "forgot" to record the circumstances of Theodosius' death. Still, while the role played by Maximinus and his friends remains uncertain (Cf. Errington 1996: 442–447), we do know that there were no reprisals after the elder Theodosius' death when the younger Theodosius ascended to the throne, suggesting that the perpetrators were no longer alive.

Despite Ammianus' silence on this matter (XXVIII.1.57), Symmachus reveals a few details about the downfall of Maximinus and his followers. His oration held before the senate in 376 (Pro patre Or. IV) reveals that Gratian also took their counsel for some time: *at primo consilium tuum deliberatio distulit, dum experiris, an improbi atque externi mores exemplo saeculi vincerentur, vel quod optimo filio congruebat, dum palam facere studes, praeterita delicta potestatum fuisse non temporum. Quid primum igitur admirer, quod circa divum munus pii filii an quod circa nos partes parentis egisti? alienorum simulatione criminum Maximinus fidem fecit suorum* (Or. IV.10). Later, a delegation of the senate visited the new emperor to lay their complaints before him (IV.11. *etsi illud magis confirmare me convenit, nostram legationem nostras egisse querimonias, ut videreris tu quoque inter ceteros vindicari*), which had apparently met with success, for Maximinus, Simplicius and Doryphorianus soon met their fate (IV.10. *Gratulamur tibi, iuvenis Auguste, quod paterni successor factus imperii, tantum malos iudices quasi hereditatis onera repudiasti*. IV.11–12. *nam priusquam senatus causa iungeretur tuae, satisfactum tibi putabas, quod insidiator regni exemplo innocentium potestate decesserat; postquam ventum est ad communes querellas, adhibuisti severitatem, qualem reliqui principes maiestatis tantum negotiis exhibebant*. Ep. 10.2.2–3. *ferox ille Maximinus ob res secundas, incubator iudiciorum, difficilis decidendis simulatibus, promptus ineundis, poena capitali exitia cunctorum lacrimasque expiavit* cf. Amm. XXVIII.1.57): cf. Symm. Or. IV.10. *urgebat enim novo fastu patientiam regiam et praefecturae suae putabat esse dispendium, si quid licuisset imperio*. Ammianus only reveals so much about Maximinus' crime that *sub Gratiano intoleranter se efferens*. Debates on the final error made by Maximinus and his group will no doubt continue to be the subject of future debates. It cannot be mere coincidence that Maximinus' later successor (from 378) in the *praefectura* was Ausonius, who in the meantime had secured high positions for his relatives and friends (PLRE, Ausonius 7, 140–141, Matthews 1975: 69–70; Sivan 1993). No mention is made of Leo, who was most likely relieved of his office at this time, or perhaps earlier (he was one of the *ministri* in Symm. Or. IV.10: *non satis tibi idonea bona illa visa sunt cum ministris*).

Very few Pannonians survived the purge, and even the few who did were removed from their post. One of them was Viventius of Siscia, for whom Ammianus had a high regard; he remained in Rome with his family and had a family burial place (ICUR V 13155, 13355; 389 AD) made next to the burial of Simplicius (ICUR V 13109=ILCV 95; 375 AD) in the Platoma built next to the Basilica Apostolorum, to where the relics of St. Quirinus, the Siscian martyr were taken after having salvaged them from Savaria (P. Quirini, Appendix, Prud. Perist. VII, ILCV 1777).<sup>41</sup> The Pannonians gradually disappeared from the empire's leading positions during the ensuing decades. One notable exception is Valerius Dalmatius, who according to the bronze tablet found at Beremend-Idamajor had started his career as a lawyer and became the governor of Lugdunensis Tertia after the 380s (ILS 8987).<sup>42</sup>

Ammianus used similar adjectives for describing the people around Maximinus:

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Helm 1956: p. XVIII. All other dates, which follow O. Seeck (cf. Demandt 1969: 600, 602–605; Errington 1996: 444, n. 38), and lay the blame on Valentinian for the execution of the *magister militum*, were proposed in the period before the discovery of the codex of the *Chronicon Oxoniensis*, which clearly gives a date of 376.

<sup>41</sup> Nagy 1944–1946: 244–257; Roncaioli 1980–1981: 245–249; Bertolino 1997: 115–127.

<sup>42</sup> Mommsen 1902a: 836–840 = Mommsen 1905: 150–154 = 1902b: 279–283; Thomas 1964: 270–273; Nagy 1987–1988: 242–243.

Leo: XXVI.1.6. *exitialis postea magister officiorum*

XXVIII.1.12. *bustuarius quidam latro Pannonius, efflans ferino rictu crudelitatem, etiam ipse nihilo minus humani sanguinis avidissimus*

Simplicius: XXVIII.1.45. *post administratam nec erectus nec tumidus sed obliquo aspectu terribilis, qui conpositis ad modestiam verbis acerba meditabatur in multos*

XXVIII.1.46. *in cruento enim certamine cum Maximino velut antepilano suo contendens, superare eum in succidendis familiarum nobilium nervis studebat, Busirim veterem et Antaeum imitatus et Phalarim, ut taurus ei solus deesse videretur Agrigentinus*

Valentinus: XXVIII.3.4. *Valentinus quidam in Valeria Pannoniae superbi spiritus homo quietis inpatiens malefica bestia ad res perniciosas consurgebat et novas*

Doryphorianus: XXVIII.1.53. *quidam repertus est Gallus, audax ad usque insaniam*

XXVIII.1.55. *iudex, quin immo praedo nefandus*

XXIX.2.22. *Festinus quidam Tridentinus ultimi sanguinis et ignoti*

Similar adjectives appear in his portraits of Petronius and Serenianus, even though they had nothing to do with Maximinus, and the latter’s rise cannot be linked to the new dynasty.

XXVI.5.7–8.7. *socer Petronius, ex praeposito Martensium militum promotus repentino saltu patricius, animo deformis et habitu, qui ad nudandos sine discretione cunctos inmaniter flagrans, nocentes pariter et insontes post exquisita tormenta quadrupli nexibus vinciebat, debita iam inde a temporibus principis Aureliani perscrutans et inpendio maerens, si quemquam absolvisset indemnem.*

8. *cuius morum intolerantiae haec quoque perniciēs accedebat quod, cum ditaretur luctibus alienis, erat inexorabilis et crudelis et intrepido corde crudissimus, nec reddendae nec accipiendae rationis umquam capax, invisior Cleandro quem agentem sub imperatore Commodō praefecturam sublata vecordia diversas legimus vexasse fortunas, et onerosior Plautiano qui praefectus itidem sub Severo ultra mortale tumens cuncta confuderat, ni gladio perisset ultore.*

XXVI.10.1–2. *cuius mors saluti plurimis fuit. nam si victoriae superfuisset incultis moribus homo et nocendi acerbitate conflagrans, Valentique ob similitudinem morum et genitalis patriae vicinitatem acceptus, occultas voluntates principis introspicens ad crudelitatem propensioris multas innocentium ediderat strages.*

## What gave rise to the dislike against the Pannonians?

(1) Their rapid rise to power and their lowly origins (Maximinus’ grandparents were Carpic coloni) were major grievances in every case. They can probably be identified with the *foedi homines*, to whom the author of the *Epit. De Caes.* alluded in relation to Valentinian (45.6. *foedis hominibus, quis sese quasi fidissimis prudentissimisque dederat*), in whom the emperor placed his trust (Alföldi 1952: 54, 134–135, n. 22). Ammianus voices a similar opinion: XXVIII.1.42. *in id tempus aut non multo prius scopae florere sunt visae, quibus nobilitatis curia mundabatur, idque portendebat extollendos quosdam despiciatissimae sortis ad gradus postestatum excelsos.* Symmachus went even further in his despise of their ancestry, especially of Maximinus’, according to whom the death of Maximinus and his group *abrogata est externis moribus vis nocendi* (Or. IV.13; cf. IV.10 *an improbi et externi mores exemplo saeculi vincerentur*).<sup>43</sup>

(2) Another source of the violent dislike was their appointment to prominent positions (which, obviously, prevented the old patricians from obtaining these posts) and their influence over the emperor as well as the fact that Maximinus and his group, although dreaded and feared (Amm. XXVIII.1.38) and regarded as upstarts, could pass judgement on the members of the old, prestigious families, which quite justifiably gave rise to bitter feelings among the leading circles of Rome.

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<sup>43</sup> Alföldi 1952: 102, 121.

(3) Ammianus Marcellinus, who lived in Rome at the time and wrote his last books after 392, was able to freely pen his thoughts without any constraints after the fall of the Pannonians (following Valentinian II's death, he did not even have to mince his words about Valentinian, cf. his portrayal using similar adjectives as for his followers: XXX.8, *saevitia*, *avaritia*, *invidia et timor*) and he could faithfully record the sentiments of his noble and pagan friends (not only the feelings of Symmachus and his followers).<sup>44</sup>

(4) If Theodosius' fall had indeed been engineered by Maximinus and his group, which would seem logical after the Valentinian affair, the general disgust with the Pannonians is quite understandable.

In the light of the above we may conclude that even though we can hardly speak of a Pannonian *factio* in the strict sense, there did exist in Valentinian's court a group whose members were largely of Pannonian and Illyrian stock, resembling Petronius' in the east. This group, which was not organised exclusively along origins, had Illyrians and others among its members, who helped their relatives' and friends' advancement. In addition to the common ancestry, they often shared a similar background (*grammaticus*, like Simplicius; lawyers, like Maximinus and Valerius Dalmatius). After Valentinian's death, their star waned and most paid with their lives for their rapid rise (e.g. *promotus repentino saltu patricius*). It seems to me that the latter conforms to the classical concept of a *factio*. Given that Ammianus described Petronius' circle as a *factio* (XXVI.7.4), the same term can be rightly used for Maximinus' group too. In his Ecclesiastic History, Rufinus makes the following remark in his account of Damasus' trial: XI.10. *Quae res factione Maximini praefecti saevi hominis, ad invidiam boni et innocentis versa est sacerdotis*. A little later (Coşkun 2002: 186–192), Hieronymus' Chronicon contains the following remark for the year 376 regarding the elder Theodosius' death (codd. LMB): Chron. Min. I. p. 631. *Theodosius ... factione eorum perit qui ipsi mox caesi sunt, id est Maximini ex praefecto et ceteri*. In this sense, we can speak of an "Illyrian front", whose members were at all times *fidissimi* to Valentinian, whom the emperor could fully trust (cf. Viventius' assignment regarding Valentinian and Valens' illness).

In the light of the above, we may rightly conclude that Ammianus and his pagan friends, the *amici* of Rome (and the Christian *clerici* of Rome) did not have a particularly high opinion of the recent advancement of Pannonians into prominent positions, to say the least – and thus the picture painted of Maximinus and his group is rather tendentious. It must also be borne in mind that a pagan aristocrat in a higher office living in Rome during Maximinus' term of office can hardly have harboured positive hopes for the future.

## Abbreviations

AE	<i>L'Année épigraphique</i>
CAH	A. Cameron & P. Garnsey (eds.), <i>The Cambridge Ancient History: The Late Empire, AD 337–425</i> , vol. 13, Cambridge, 1998.
CIL	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum</i> , Berlin
CSEL	<i>Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum</i> , Vienna – Salzburg
ICUR	<i>Inscriptiones Christianae Urbis Romae</i> , Rome 1922–
ILCV	E. Diehl (ed.), <i>Inscriptiones Latinae Christianae Veteres</i> , 4 vols., Berlin, 1925–1967.
ILS	H. Dessau, <i>Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae</i> , 3 vols., Berlin, 1892–1916.
PLRE	A. H. M. Jones, J. R. Martindale & J. Morris, <i>The prosopography of the later Roman empire I</i> , Cambridge, 1971.
PWRE	<i>Pauly-Wissowa Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> , Stuttgart

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<sup>44</sup> Cameron 1964: 15–28; Selem 1971–1972: 1–50.

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