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PIPA AND GALLIENUS*

I. Introduction

It is no secret that emperor Gallienus was as unfortunate in his reign as in the Latin historiographical tradition that succeeded him. An animosity began to take shape at the end of the third century as a result of the separation of Gaul and the East during his tenure,¹ and it seems to have its greatest exponent in the source known as the *Enmannsche Kaisergeschichte* (*EKG*), a hypothetical lost work postulated by A. Enmann in 1884, dating after Constantine's death.²

In these literary sources, this attitude towards Gallienus enhances the contrast between the “bad prince” and the *princeps optimus*, a very common rhetorical device in ancient historiography which, in this case, has an impact in favour of Claudius Gothicus, the ancestor of the Constantinian dynasty. The heir works to the *EKG* certainly denote notable Constantinian propaganda. Curiously, in the Greek tradition this contrast is seen in the opposite direction: Valerian, celebrated by Trebelius Pollio in the *HA*, is the object of sharp judgement in Zosimus (1. 36), while Gallienus is treated in a neutral light (1. 37–40) or even praised in Zonaras (12. 25) and Malalas (12. 27), both of whom describe him as magnanimous and kind towards the needy.³

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¹ *Pan. Lat.* 8[4]. 10. 1, from 297, where his neglect or bad fortune is lamented, as opposed to the restoration of the borders by the Tetrarchs.

² Enmann 1884, proposing a date slightly later than 284. This date has been moved to a period normally between 337 and 357: Barnes 1970; Bird 1973; Burgess 2005 and 1995, as used by Chastagnol 1970, 10; Syme 1980, 260 (= 1983, 151); 1971a, 221 f.; 1971b, 40.

³ The Christian literature is also favourable, for obvious reasons. Emperor Julian is an exception, since his opinions on Gallienus, despite writing in Greek, are founded on the tradition from the *EKG* (*Caes.* 313 c). A good resume is available in Wickert 1926, 366.

In any case, no hypothesis is exclusive or changes the fact that the portrait of Gallienus' reign in Latin tradition offers a litany of deadly sins: from the neglect of the government (Aur. Vict. 33. 3; Eutr. 9. 8; 11; SHA *Gall.* 4. 3; 5.7; 6. 3–7; Hier. *Chron.* 304 i) and his idleness and gluttony (Aur. Vict. 33. 15; SHA *Gall.* 3. 6–7; 9. 3; 16. 1–3; 17. 4–6; *Tyr. Trig.* 29. 1), to the fiercest cruelty (SHA *Gall.* 11. 2; 18. 1; *Tyr. Trig.* 9. 3–9; 26. 1–2, 5) or contempt for his captive father (SHA *Gall.* 1. 1–2; 3. 8–9; 9. 2, 7; 10. 2, 5; 17. 1), and ending with a liking for taverns (Aur. Vict. 33. 6; Amm. Marc. 14. 1. 9; SHA *Gall.* 21. 6; *Tyr. Trig.* 3. 4; 9. 1; 23. 1; 29. 1) and women (Aur. Vict. 33. 6; SHA *Gall.* 17. 7–9; 21. 3; *Tyr. Trig.* 3. 4; 9. 1; 29. 1; Oros. 7. 22. 13). This final excess will be the object of our attention: the account of Pipa, or Pipara, Gallienus' barbarian concubine. This is an outstanding and unique episode which encompasses several scholarly fields, especially the Empire's diplomatic dealings in response to the border pressure issues in the north. The sources are scarce and at the same time both complementary and contradictory, so it is necessary to sift the information and determine the certainties and possibilities before making use of them.

II. Princess Pipa in Historiography

Indeed, the misgovernment of this “bad emperor” is illustrated by the account that refers to a certain barbarian princess, Pipa by name (*PIR*² P 317; *PLRE* I Pipa), with whom Gallienus kept concubinage, which is presented as nefarious.

Three documents refer to this woman. They all take from Enmann's common source, and despite the obvious similarities, some notable differences can be observed.

In the first place, Aurelius Victor (*c.* 360) reports the following (*Caes.* 33. 6–7):

Inter haec ipse popinas ganeasque obiens lenonum ac vinariorum amicitii haerebat, expositus Saloninae coniugi atque amori flagitioso filiae Attali Germanorum regis, Pipae nomine; qua causa etiam civiles motus longe atrociores orti. Namque primus omnium Postumus, qui forte barbaris per Galliam praesidebat, imperium ereptum ierat.⁴

⁴ Pichlmayr–Gruendel 1966, 109. Henceforth we will use the Teubner edition for the four quoted passages.

Meanwhile, (Gallienus) kept visiting dens and taverns and befriended pimps and wine-drinkers, while abandoned to his wife Salonina and his scandalous love towards the daughter of the Germanic king Attalus, Pipa by name. Because of that, more dreadful wars started. Indeed, Postumus, who was ruling the Gaul against the barbarians by chance, was the first of all to take the power.

This passage presents the relationship between the princess and the emperor as part of the vices of the latter, on the same level as drinking and frequenting dens of ill repute. Although Pipa's father is identified as a Germanic king named Attalus⁵ (*PIR*² A 1328; *PLRE* I Attalus), the data remains anecdotal and irrelevant, the result of copying the base source for the text.

In addition to associating this “love affair” with other vices of the emperor, it is also explicitly denigrated as “shameful” (*flagitioso*), an adjective not applied to his consort, Cornelia Salonina,⁶ whose mention seems to confirm the “affair” was contemporary to the marriage. Indeed, there is no record that the Augusta Salonina died or lost her rank at any time during her husband's reign. She is placed in Milan in 268, shortly before her husband's death, by Zonaras (12. 25).⁷

Finally, the consequences of this grievance transcend the family realm and, like all Gallienus' vices, affect the stability of the State as the cause of new civil wars, for example the uprising in Gaul led by Postumus. The causality is not specified so it should not go beyond rhetoric. Nevertheless, the statement is useful to give an *ante quem* date to the beginning of the

⁵ The name is a Latin adaptation of the Germanic root *Adl* found in names like “Albert” or “Alphonse”, which in turn recalls the Greek, unrelated name of the kings of Pergamon. A similar case is that of one of the sons of Zenobia, *Hairan* or *Haeranes* (*PIR*² S 329), altered to form *Herodes* (*PLRE* I Herodes 1), *Herodianus* (*PLRE* I Herodianus 3) and *Herennianus* (*PIR*² H 95; *PLRE* I Herennianus 1); or another of her sons *Wahballath*, adapted as *Vabalathus* and translated as *Athenodorus* (*PIR*² S 347; *PLRE* I Athenodorus 2); a summary of this series of names can be found in Stoneman 1992, 114 f.

⁶ Although it may not be referred to as *flagitiosus*, Gallienus “abandoned” (*expositus*) to his wife Salonina also offers an obvious negative connotation. This has a place in the negative treatment we find in Aurelius Victor towards the female characters who engaged in politics, such as Messalina (4. 5), Plotina (13. 13), Julia Domna (21. 3) and Victoria (33. 14), Callu 1996, 143, contrasting with the sympathies they occasionally receive in the *HA* (especially *Tyr. Trig.* 30–31). See Estrada San Juan 2021.

⁷ She is not named but is called βασιλίσσα. See also King 1873, 307.

relationship with the princess at least according to the disposition of events in the *EKG*: the Gallic secession took place in mid-260.⁸

More neutral is the *Epitome de Caesaribus* (c. 400) with the following account (33. 1):

Gallienus quidem in loco Cornelii filii sui Salonianum, alterum filium, subrogavit, amoris diverso pellicum deditus Saloninae coniugis et concubinae, quam per pactionem concessa parte superioris Pannoniae a patre, Marcomannorum rege, matrimonii specie suscepit Pipam nomine.⁹

In fact, Gallienus replaced his son Cornelius with his other son Salonianus (sic), devoted to the different love of his lovers: his wife Salonina and his mistress, Pipa by name, whom he took up from her father, King of the Marcomanni, in the guise of a marriage after granting a part of Upper Pannonia by a treaty.

Gallienus' chapter in the *Epitome* (33) stands out for not containing negative criticism of him, not even an explicit negative characterization. In J. Schlumberger's opinion, the text employed by the epitomator as source, despite following a Latin source, uses assessments from the Greek tradition, which is more thoughtful towards the figure of Gallienus.¹⁰ This circumstance conveys some historical interest to the chapter since it does not share the destructive criticism of the *EKG* but focuses only on Princess Pipa and Gallienus' ultimate fate in Milan.

The passage possibly suggests some kind of plot on the part of the two ladies, if we connect the appointment of Saloninus to the romance.¹¹

⁸ Lafaurie 1964, 99; cf. De Blois 1976, 6, who places Saloninus' death in the winter of 259–260.

⁹ Pichlmayr–Gruendel 1970, 160.

¹⁰ Schlumberger 1974, 151 f.: “Seine Quellen scheinen hauptsächlich lateinische gewesen zu sein. Seine Urteile aber stützen sich oft auf die griechische Tradition”. See also Festy 2002, who proposes, at the end of the biographies of Marius Maximus in 222 and of the work of Cassius Dio in 229, the use of Nicomachus Flavianus' *Annales*, who in turn would have employed Dexippus for the reign of Gallienus, pp. xxvii–xxxi. See also Barnes 1976, 264.

¹¹ The Latin text seems to connect both ideas. A different opinion is found in the translation by Festy 2002, 36: “Gallien cependant nomma à la place de son fils Cornélius son cadet Salonin; il abandonnait à des passions contraires pour des maîtresses”. On the contrary, Banchich 2009: “Gallienus, in fact, substituted another son, Salonianus, in place of his own son Cornelius, eager for the separate love of Salonina, his wife, and of a concubine”.

These alleged intrigues which are the only negative point amid otherwise neutral information are connected with the emperor's love (*amori*) for his two lovers (*pellicum*), who later become a wife (*coniugis*, Salonina) and a concubine (*concubina*), remarking the different categories. However, as it is explained below, this was not a normal concubinage but rather "the appearance of a marriage" (*matrimonii specie*). That apparent marriage also involved a dowry, the concession of Roman territory to the princess's father,¹² Attalus, whose name is not given, just the title: the king of the Marcomanni, a unique detail from this document.

Like Victor, the author of the *Epitome* and its source confirm the coexistence of Pipa and the Augusta Salonina. Therefore, if Pipa's was an actual marriage, it would be bigamous. The law could not allow two wives let alone a marriage to a non-citizen. In case we assume that an alliance cannot be sealed by concubinage, as the epitomator seems to imply, the simplest solution is not to discard the report but to admit it to the letter: that *matrimonii specie* would have been arranged in keeping with the Germanic custom, whereas under Roman law Pipa's condition would be that of a concubine.¹³

¹² We will see below this must not be seen as an abandonment of Roman territory.

¹³ Solution accepted by Geiger 2015, 333 f.; Goltz–Hartmann 2008, 239 ("nach römischem Recht irrelevant, aber als symbolischer Akt möglicherweise für die Markomannen"); Speidel 2006, 76; Bray 1995, 31 and 123; Brauer 1975, 124; and Homo 1913, 8; Bray and Speidel recall the passage from Tacitus on the marriage between the Germans (*Germ.* 18. 1), to which it is usual to add that of the two wives of King Ariovistus, the second one being the result of a political alliance (*Caes. Bell. Gall.* 1. 53). Somewhere between is Van Berchem 1956, 13, who refers to Pipa as "maîtresse en titre", maybe with Versailles in mind. An alternative interpretation, beyond qualifying the data as a mere invention to defame Gallienus (Kuhoff 1979, 18), comes from Den Boer 1972, 80, who proposes Pipa as a splitting up of the Augusta Julia Cornelia Salonina and so identifying both women as a single Germanic princess: Gallienus supposedly would have practised Germanic habits and hence his wife stood for another slander in the aggressive tradition against the emperor. However, we are not aware of any philo-Germanic attitude on the part of the probably Greek Salonina (*Salonina Chrysogone* in eastern minted coins, *PIR*² C 1499; *PLRE* I Salonina), in addition to the absence of matching dates, R. Friedl 1996, 174 f. n. 127. Finally, the idea that Attalus' daughter was decisive in the alliance not as a concubine or wife but as a hostage is suggestive (Goltz–Hartmann 2008, 239; Kehne 2001, 299; Bird 1994, 138; Hornsby 1952, 39, elevated to the status of lover or wife only to degrade Gallienus; Kuhoff 1979, 18, although "Gallienus was not in a position to demand any hostages"; De Blois 2019, 118 n. 357). Indeed, Attalus must have had the upper hand.

On the other hand, the notice is preceded by Valerian II being succeeded by Saloninus (misspelt “Salonianus”, like the son of Cato the Elder)¹⁴ as Caesar, which is cited as related to the desire or the manoeuvres of both his wife and his lover.¹⁵ The death of Valerian Caesar could have been overlooked in summarizing the account. In that case, perhaps it was told as a consequence of the intrigues between the two women in the original source, which brings to mind the Caesar Crispus incident. It would be logical to think that the mention of the Caesars in this context comes from the Greek tradition instead of the *EKG* due to their absence in Victor’s account, but the next passage will lead us to rethink that.

Finally, the *Historia Augusta* (*HA*, c. 400) presents two passages in which the Marcomannic princess makes an appearance. The first of them, from Gallienus’ biography, undoubtedly draws from the same sources as Victor and the *Epitome* (*Gall.* 21. 3–4):

Tam variae item opiniones sunt de Salonini nomine, ut, qui se verius putet dicere, a matre sua Salonina appellatum esse [dicat], quam is perditte dilexit. [Et dilexit] Piparam nomine, barbaram regis filiam [Attali]. Gallienus cum suis semper flavo crine<m> condit.¹⁶

There are many opinions about Saloninus’ name, though the author who believes himself more correct [says] he was named after his mother Salonina,¹⁷ whom Gallienus loved very much. [He also loved] some barbarian woman, Pipara by name, a daughter of the king [Attalus]. Gallienus always dyed his hair blond when he was with his people.

¹⁴ Plut. *Cato M.* 24. 9: “Cato had a son from this marriage, whom they named Salonianus, derived from the mother’s name”; and Gell. *NA* 13. 20. 8: “(Cato) married the daughter of his client Saloniun, from whom Marcus Cato Salonianus was born, whose name derived from Saloniun, his mother’s father”. A simple mistake made by the copyist according to Festy 2002, 155, since Salonina’s name is correct.

¹⁵ Den Boer 1972, 86 understands from this passage that Saloninus, in the source of the *Epitome*, is the son of Pipa (similar reasoning is found in King 1873, 311). If so, *SHA Gall.* 21. 3 (next passage) would be amending that source by specifying that his name comes from Salonina. This kind of correction is not uncommon in the *HA*, although the biographer’s reactions tend to be exaggerated: see below n. 26.

¹⁶ Hohl 1965, 98, except lacunas restorations.

¹⁷ False erudition by the author, since the name of the Augusta Salonina already appeared in the base text of the *EKG*, see *infra* the table. This false debate, moreover, had already taken place shortly before in the same book (*Gall.* 19. 3), which could indicate he had found the same topic when changing the source.

This passage is abruptly inserted in the work – as it is frequent – towards the end of the *Vita Gallieni*, when the next book had already been introduced (*Gall.* 19. 7; 21. 1–2). This is the result of the messy, hasty way of writing admitted by the author himself (*Tyr. Trig.* 33. 8).¹⁸ We can assume that, once the book was finished, the biographer realized he had not included this notice from his source, as well as the years of Gallienus' reign and some brief anecdotes, which are added with hardly any attention to the style or the textual coherence (*Gall.* 21. 5–6).¹⁹

First of all, it can be noted that it is a lacunary passage. There are two lacunas postulated in the Teubner edition, indicated by Peter and Hohl: *esse ... quam* and *filiam ... Gallienus*. The popular edition by Magie proposes restoring them with *dicat* and *quare* respectively, and assumes a third lacuna, *dilexit ... Piparam*, filled in with *et dilexit*, in addition to exchanging *quamvis* for *quam is*, which is the reading chosen here.

Without the lacuna introduced by Magie, the text already makes sense (*quamvis perdit dilexit Piparam*, “although he loved Pipara very much, excessively”), but we can see that the change (“he also loved”) brings us closer to the source, since it also reports that Gallienus loved both the empress and the princess, as Victor and the *Epitome* point out in the previous passages (“abandoned to his wife Salonina and his scandalous love towards the daughter of the Germanic king Attalus, Pipa by name”; “devoted to the different love of his lovers”).

Nevertheless, we disagree with Magie's restitution at the end of the passage (*quare*), which is intended to link the following sentence to the notice. Undoubtedly, the presence of a connector like *quare* lends more coherence to the text, but coherence is what is lacking at the end of the *vita*, in which ideas without a thematic relationship appear constantly. The statement about Gallienus' blond hair is probably unrelated to the princess; it is rather a plain description of one of the elements of imperial pageantry that began to take hold throughout the third century: the assimilation of the monarch with the solar divinity.²⁰

¹⁸ Otherwise Syme 1971b, 24: “yet too might be a literary artifice”.

¹⁹ And he apologizes for it at the end of the work (*Car.* 20. 2–3). This makes it very difficult to distinguish possible interpolations, especially in the second half of the work, where the prose is more careless; the author acknowledges more than once his poverty of style (*Prob.* 1. 6; 2. 7; *Quadr. tyr.* 15. 10).

²⁰ Idea repeated in *Gall.* 16. 4. The same ritual appears previously in another biography from the *HA*: emperor Lucius Verus, says the author, took pride in his blond hair and dusted it with gold powder to make it shine (*Ver.* 10. 7). It should not be surprising to find such an element of the imperial ceremonial, which our

Instead, we propose to restore this last lacuna with the name of the Germanic leader.²¹ Firstly because it appears in Victor, and therefore it is logical to suppose that it is provided also by the main source; and secondly, because the author of the *HA*, led by his – feigned? – obsession with onomastics, does not miss an opportunity to provide names, real or invented, for his characters. In that sense, he would hardly remove the name “Attalus” from the passage he is copying: where the epitomator summarizes his sources, the *HA* biographer devotes himself to a verbose *amplificatio* in all sort of details.

Regarding the content, the chapter starts with a brief mention of Saloninus, just like the *Epitome*. It may be a coincidence, or it may be that the biographer also alternated between the *EKG* and the same Greek source of the epitomator. He acknowledges not infrequently that he is resorting to the Greek tradition, either in the form of fictitious authors (e.g. *Diad.* 7. 4; *Aur.* 27. 6) or known authors like Herodian or Dexippus (*Gord.* 2. 1; *Max.* 15. 3; *Claud.* 12. 6, etc.). In any case, the information provided does not allude to any intrigue to put the diadem of Caesar on Saloninus (not *Salonianus*). It revolves around the biographer’s onomastic interests, which are present throughout the work and make it difficult to distinguish between humorous erudition and genuine curiosity on the part of the anonymous author.

Then, the name of Salonina is given, as in Victor and the *Epitome*, and her husband’s love for her is mentioned, as well as – through the restoration – his love for princess Pipara, daughter of the barbarian king. The most striking feature of the text is the name *Pipara*, which differs from that given by the other two authors. This name, if it is not a copyist’s mistake, has led scholars in two directions: from pointing out wordplay like many other examples that these biographies abound with to looking for onomastic similarities outside the work, as we will elaborate on later.

late biographer would know well, out of context. Similarly, we find Elagabalus possibly alluding to Constantine covering the ground over which he would be passing with golden sand (*Hel.* 31. 8), described as another extravagance, like Verus’ and Gallienus’ hair, while the author being fully aware of the meaning of this gesture and critical of it as Synesius of Cyrene was (*De regn.* 16 c–d, a. 400). This kind of intentional decontextualization is intended as mockery. Other examples in the work include *proskýnesis* in *Maximin.* 28. 7 or eastern ceremonial in *Alex.* 18. 3.

²¹ Also suggested by Barnes 1972, 148.

Finally, we find that the *HA* is the only text that reuses the character of Pipa/Pipara, in recycling the same passage. It is common for the author to reuse material from the so-called *vitae maiores* in writing the *minores*' biographies,²² as in this case, the biography of the usurper Postumus (*Tyr. Trig.* 3. 4):²³

‘Quo interfecto ab omni exercitu et ab omnibus Gallis Postumus gratanter acceptus talem se pr<a>ebuit per annos septem, ut Gallias instauraverit, cum Gallienus luxuriae et popinis vacaret et amore barbarae mulieris consenesceret.²⁴

‘When he (Saloninus) was killed, Postumus was accepted willingly by all the army and by all the Gauls, and for seven years he acted in such a way that he restored the Gauls, while Gallienus spent his time in rankness and taverns and aged in love with a barbarian woman.

This chapter goes back to Aurelius Victor. In it, the “flagitious” relationship between Gallienus and the barbarian princess is associated again with dens and personal carelessness, and it is also related to the Postumus rebellion in Gaul, in a less explicit way. This confirms that it is a simple reuse of the same Latin source.

A comparative table of the four accounts about Pipa:

	Aur. Vict. 33. 6–7	<i>Epit. Caes.</i> 33. 1	<i>SHA Gall.</i> 21. 3–4	<i>SHA Tyr.</i> <i>Trig.</i> 3. 4
Linkage between Gallienus and Pipa's concubinage and other vices	×			×
Cause of Postumus' uprising in Gaul	×			×
Gallienus is in love with both women	×	×	×?	
Saloninus precedes the account		×	×	×

²² Categorization at the proposal of Mommsen 1890, 246, already with a first listing.

²³ This passage is ignored in the princess's entry in both *PLRE I* Pipa and Stein 1950, 1718.

²⁴ Hohl 1965, 101.

	Aur. Vict. 33. 6–7	<i>Epit. Caes.</i> 33. 1	<i>SHA Gall.</i> 21. 3–4	<i>SHA Tyr.</i> <i>Trig.</i> 3. 4
Granting of Pannonian territory		×		
Daughter of a barbarian or Germanic king	×		×	×
Daughter of a Marcomannic king		×		
Daughter of Attalus	×		×?	
Pipa as a concubine, lover	×	×	×	×
Pipa as a wife		×		

At this point, it is easy to distinguish the two traditions. On the one hand, for the report on Pipa the author of the source of the *Epitome* preferred to stick to the Greek source before the Latin *EKG*, probably finding the former more reliable.

On the other hand, it is not certain if the *HA*, despite having authors such as Herodian or Dexippus in its repertoire, has resorted here to the Greek source of the *Epitome*, since one of the coincidences, the simple mention of Saloninus and for a different purpose, may be accidental. As for the emperor's love towards both women, shared by the three sources although uncertain in the *HA* due to being the result of the restoration of a lacuna, it must have its origin in the common *EKG*.

For all these reasons, I suggest the following reconstruction for the two traditions:

<i>KG tradition</i>	<i>Second tradition</i>
In a negative evaluation of the figure of Gallienus, amid excesses such as frequenting carousals and places of ill repute, the emperor began a relationship of concubinage/love affair with Pipa, daughter of the Germanic king Attalus, not ignoring at the same time his wife Salonina, because he loved them both. This was cause for the Postumus rebellion.	Gallienus began concubinage, arranged through a certain marriage, with Pipa, daughter of the Marcomannic king. By this marriage, the emperor granted a territory in Pannonia to his new father-in-law.

Another solution for the textual tradition has been proposed for the account. According to J. Schlumberger, the *HA* biographer would have read Aurelius Victor but not his source, the *EKG*, which would share all

the details in Victor and the *Epitome*, thus undervaluing the unique details in the epitomator. In this way, they would all be summaries from the same source.²⁵ Nevertheless, we consider the uniqueness of details in the *Epitome*, and the absence of an invective, as sufficient to claim a second source, presumably Greek.

III. Pipa or Pipara

On the issue of the name of the Marcomannic princess, “Pipa” has commonly been accepted as the name in use (and thus it appears in prosopographic dictionaries), and “Pipara” as the distortion, due to verifying the former in the larger number of documents (two versus one) and the latter in a source that is otherwise prone to playing with names.

Nevertheless, paucity of evidence does not allow these arguments to be taken for granted. Just as Victor and the *Epitome* draw, at least in part, from the *EKG*, there are cases where the *HA* solves onomastic issues after consulting other sources.²⁶

In order to explain the departure from tradition, it has been claimed that “Pipara” was the result of silly wordplay by the anonymous biographer,²⁷

²⁵ Schlumberger 1974, 152: “Die Epitome kennt insgesamt mehr Details: ‘per pactionem concessa parte superioris Pannoniae a patre’; aber auch Victor ist um den Namen des Markomannenfürsten Attalus reicher als die Epitome”. Similarly, Syme 1980, 260 f. (= 1983, 151 f.) gives the *EKG* as the sole source for Pipa’s story.

²⁶ Thus, for example, the entire biographical account of the emperors Pupienus and Balbinus is dotted with the author’s constant doubt about “Pupienus” and “Maximus” being the same person or not, correcting himself (*Maxim.* 33. 3–4; *Max.* 1. 2; 15. 4–6; 16. 6–7; 18). He also reacts indignantly when correcting his Latin sources (Victor, Eutropius, the *EKG*) about the number of Gordians after having read in Greek authors that they were three (*Gord.* 2. 1) and not two, as he had previously assumed (*Macr.* 3. 5; *Diad.* 6. 3). However, when testimony to corroborate these digressions is absent, the author tends to resort to a pretence of erudition with humorous overtones and there is certainly an ‘érudition de grammaticus’ (Chastagnol 1970, 35). An example analogous to that of Pipara is that of *Vitruvia vel Victoria*, mother of emperor Victorinus (*Tyr. Trig.* 5. 3; 6. 3; 24. 1; 31. 1, *PIR*² 430; *PLRE* I Victoria), known only as “Victoria” in Aurelius Victor (33. 14).

²⁷ It may come from the word *piper* (pepper) and the *piperatum* sauce according to Syme 1980, 261 (= 1983, 152), one more example of the author’s lame puns and jokes which sometimes lead to the formation of fictitious names. For some examples, see Chastagnol 1970, 17 and 36. Nevertheless, “Piper” is overlooked as an attested name, see below n. 31.

thus ruling out the historical validity of the name. At the same time, however, the onomastic resemblance to the name of a soldier attested by epigraphy in Germania has been put into play,²⁸ as well as that of a Dacian king in Rome.²⁹ The observation did not have effect, even though outside of Germany “Piper” is a root found in inscriptions throughout the Empire, especially in the West.³⁰ Accordingly, we will highlight a certain *Victoria Piperia* in Thugga who was presumably married to a *Gaius Egnatius Victor* (*ILAfr* 588. 89).

On the other hand, the only other testimony to the “Pipa” form is in a highborn Syracusan lady from the first century BC (*Cic. Verr.* 3. 77–79; 5. 31; 5. 81).³¹ It is noteworthy that this *Pipa*, a lover of the infamous governor Gaius Verres, is described as greedy and manipulative in collusion with another woman, *Tertia*, also Verres’ lover (3. 78–79. 83; 5. 31; 5. 40; 5. 81). Undoubtedly, it is an excellent parallel to draw with the story of Pipa and Salonina. Hence it is possible that “Pipa” is the corrupted name, presumably in the *EKG*, with Cicero’s *In Verrem* in mind.

The name “Pipara” therefore does not seem to be a joke or an unclear allusion to pepper or a spicy sauce (n. 27), while the name “Pipa” does evoke certain doubts. However, the contempt towards the *HA* as a source has led to discard the former.

So, if the biographer did not manipulate the princess’s name, the question of its origin in the historical tradition returns to us. Since Victor and the *Epitome* give us the form “Pipa”, an alternative source for “Pipara” should be sought out. If so, it could be a breviary or a chronicle which did not differ in the rest of the story from the other two traditions mentioned above.

The biographer, in the book dedicated to Gallienus and Saloninus, quotes two spurious authors, as he usually does throughout the work. The first one is *Annius Cornicula* (*PIR*² A 641), who is described as a flatterer

²⁸ *Lucius Piperacius Optatus*, soldier of the *Legio XV Primigenia* in Bonn (*CIL* XIII, 8080), Syme 1980, 261 (= 1983, 152).

²⁹ *Pieporus*, king of the Costoboci married to a Dacian woman (*CIL* VI, 1801), Migliorati 2016, 250.

³⁰ Just to name a few examples, we have a *Lucius Valerius Piperclus* in Bolonia (*CIL* XI, 6680, etc.), a *Sextus Spurius Piperolus* in Nimes (*CIL* XII, 3333), or an *Aulus Mineius Piper* in Brindisi (*CIL* I, 3173) which turns “pepper” into a real name, with extensive evidence. Even in the Danubian *limes* itself, like a *Marcus Aquilius Piperas* in Augsburg (*CIL* III, 5837) or another *Piper* on the riverbank in Dacia (*AE* 1959, 307).

³¹ Also adduced in Syme 1980, 260 (= 1983, 151).

(*Gall.* 17. 2) – perhaps a panegyrist? –,³² and the second is *Palfurius Sura* (*PIR*² P 47; *PLRE* I Sura), who allegedly wrote some ‘ephemerides’ about Gallienus’ life. The author’s criticism against Cornicula is similar to that of the bad historian often embodied in the bogus person of *Aelius Iunius Cordus* (*PIR*² A 198, ‘ridicule ac stulte’ in *Gord.* 21. 3) in *Junius Capitolinus*’ biographies.³³ Following the rules that the author imposes on himself to maintain the farce of multiple authorship, he could not turn to Cordus’ character again in the *Vita Gallieni*, since that book was signed by *Trebellius Pollio*. Instead, Sura’s ephemeris is more like the chronicle we seek for.³⁴ We could also add the *libri auctorum* by a third author, *Acholi* (*PIR*² A 36), a ‘magister admissionum Valeriani principis’ mentioned in the *Vita Aureliani* (*SHA Aur.* 12. 4), who is involved in obviously false reports.³⁵

Unfortunately, speculation cannot be taken further. We will add that perhaps it is not the correct path to decide which of the two names has been manipulated or corrupted when the root amply attested in epi-

³² Rohrbacher 2016, 61 f.

³³ Mentioned interchangeably as Junius Cordus or Aelius Cordus, the peak of a bad biographer, whose bad practices the *HA* author himself also commits; ‘a splendid and cynical performer’, Syme 1971a, 15; 1971b, 25–29, cf. 74 f.

³⁴ Sura’s name is possibly fictitious, perhaps inspired by another *Palfurius Sura* (*PIR*² P 46), a senator who was executed after Domitian’s death under the accusation of the Senate, according to the Scholiast of Juvenal (4. 53) and Marius Maximus (says the scholiast) in his lost *Vita Nervae*; after all, Maximus was the main source for the first half of the *Historia Augusta*. Towards the end of the work, Syme 1971a, 9 considers the name of the brigand *Palfuerius* (*Prob.* 16. 4, *PIR*² P 45; *PLRE* I Palfuerius) a ‘perverted name’ for *Palfurius*; cf. Rohrbacher 2016, 25. For a historical treatment of this supposed author as a possible source of Aurelius Victor, see Cizek 1994, 134 and 288, with a *stemma* on 139.

Regarding the name of Annius Cornicula, it is not known to be reflected in another character but does derive from one of the biographer’s practices, the invention of names reminiscent of emperors. Thus this case is compared by Syme with Annius Severus, father-in-law of Gordian (*Gord.* 6. 4–5, *PIR*² A 690); with Aurelian’s freedman and also historian Aurelius Festivus (*Quadr. tyr.* 6. 2, *PIR*² A 1504; *PLRE* I Festivus), and with Trajan’s biographer *Aurelius Verus* (*Alex.* 48. 6, *PIR*² A 1630). However, the latter is a clear reference to Aurelius Victor, mentioned along with his colleagues *Fabius Marcellinus* (*PIR*² F 44) and *Stattius Valens* (*PIR*² S 643) (i.e. Ammianus Marcellinus and Eutropius, Schlumberger 1974, 130).

³⁵ As a possible source for the *EKG* in Cizek 1994, 134–136, 139, 207 and 288. He is usually suggested to be related to a homonym ὑπαρχος in Sardes known by an inscription (*IGR* IV, 1510; *PLRE* I Acholi). See Estrada San Juan 2022.

graphy is none other than “Piper”. Just as “Adl” becomes “Attalus”, both “Pipa” and “Pipara” can go through adaptations of “Piper” in some local spelling.³⁶

IV. Date and Nature of the Alliance

Regardless of onomastic issues, there are still open questions about the reported event and its historical context, as other scholars have ventured before: first of all, the date.

This alliance, resulting in the settlement of the Marcomannic people on Pannonian territory, necessarily had to take place after the Marcomannic invasion of the province at the beginning of the reign,³⁷ which was probably the first reason for the treaty, to be sealed with the betrothal. As we have seen, Victor and the *HA* date the concubinage or marriage shortly before the usurpation of Postumus in 260, and the *Epitome* cites it as already established when Saloninus was chosen as the new Caesar.³⁸

Therefore, the hypothetical Greek tradition gives the end of 258 as the date *ante quem*, and the Latin one sets the date before the middle of 260. So, according to the *Epitome*, the marriage alliance was sealed shortly after Gallienus arrived at the Danubian front, which leads us to think that the proposal would already have been formalized before, either by Gallienus or by Attalus. Nevertheless, from the information given by Victor and the *HA*, the pact can be imagined as a solution agreed upon *in situ*.³⁹

³⁶ See nn. 28–31. As a note of curiosity, the German language preserves the word in different forms and its meanings include an onomastic use in the surname *Pieper*, *Pfeiffer* or *Pfeuffer*. See Grimm 1971, c. 1633–1635, 1641–1645, 1652 f. for different etymologies.

³⁷ Homo 1913, 8.

³⁸ After Ingenius’ rebellion on the Danube, which was triggered by the death of Valerian II in middle or late 258, Fitz 1966, 24. It tempts to place *Ulpus Crinitus* on the scene as *dux* of the Illyricum (*PIR*² V, 547), a position attributed by the *HA* in 258 (from the consulate of *Nummius Tuscus*, *Aur.* 13. 1). However, the scene with Crinitus and Tuscus is fictitious, a clear piece of Theodosian propaganda, and the existence of Crinitus himself is questioned.

³⁹ It is hard to imagine it otherwise without invalidating the account entirely, like Hornsby 1952, 39, who denies the concubinage or marriage as well as the dates given by the sources but does validate the alliance with the Marcomannic people, from which he extracts that “Gallienus himself need not have appeared in Pannonia”.

Both versions of the account thus match the most accepted historical reconstruction of events: the pact with the king of the Marcomanni had to take place after the defeat of the usurper Ingenuus at the hands of Gallienus and Aureolus in 258,⁴⁰ with the legitimate emperor displaced to the Danube, where he would have been present between the end of 258 and the beginning of 259.

The pact, as seen, took place after Ingenuus and Regalianus' uprisings. Here we find a reason for the emperor to trust the defence of the Pannonian frontier not to a third *dux* but to a local chieftain linked to him personally by both vassalage and kinship.⁴¹

In spite of this, the pact between Gallienus and the Marcomanni lasted in time beyond the death of the emperor. This is evidenced by Ammianus Marcellinus when he includes these people in the Danubian defensive line (31. 4. 2), and also by the *Notitia Dignitatum*, in which we find the name of the Marcomanni in many military units (Occ. 5. 49–50, 198–199; 6. 22. 65; 7. 38. 183) as well as a *tribunus gentis Marcomannorum* under the command of the *dux* of Pannonia Prima (Occ. 34. 24). We should guess that *Fritigil, regina Marcomannorum* at the end of the fifth century (*PLRE* I Fritigil) attested by Paulinus of Milan (*V. Ambr.* 36), belonged to this *gens Marcomannorum* too.⁴²

This procedure, the settlement of client nations on Roman territory so as to strengthen the *limes* or rather to make up for its deficiencies, had been used previously in the same reign of Gallienus, with an Alamannic or Frankish chief on the Rhine (Zos. 1. 30. 3).⁴³ It should be noted that

⁴⁰ Bird 1994, 138; De Blois 1976, 4; 34; Fitz 1966, 11; 36 f.; Mennen 2011, 219; Mócsy 1974, 206 f.

⁴¹ Migliorati 2016, 252: “quella della fedeltà vassallatica dei Germani al proprio signore”.

⁴² Van Berchem 1956, 15 supposes the reduction of an autonomous Marcomannic kingdom within the Empire to a simple auxiliary corps under Aurelian or Diocletian as the origin of the tribune mentioned in the *Notitia Dignitatum*. However, it could be that this tribunate was the dignity granted to each leader of the Marcomanni such as Fritigil's husband just like the patriarch of the Jews held the dignity of prefect.

⁴³ Alamannic, before the end of the Frankish raid in 257, in order to take care of the invasion “entschlossener”, Manni 1972, 966 f.; 1949, 21 n. 2; also Festy 2002, 155 f.; Migliorati 2016, 251; Frankish, maybe in 257 (so after the invasion), with the emperor on the Rhine, Geiger 2015, 332; Germanic, in 256, De Blois 1976, 34. See too Fitz 1966, 36 f.; Homo 1913, 15. Coexistence of both treaties, the one on the Rhine recounted by Zosimus and Pipara's on the Danube, in Manni 1949, 21 f.; Drinkwater 1987, 58.

the Marcomanni themselves were already part of the sphere of Roman influence and politics after the end of the Marcomannic Wars at the end of the second century. They probably joined Septimius Severus at the beginning of the civil war (Herodian. 2. 9. 12), with Roman citizenship being granted to a *rex Germanorum* as a result (*CIL* III, 4453).⁴⁴ This relationship changed after the barbarian invasions from the reign of Severus Alexander (Herodian. 6. 7) until the betrothal pact with Gallienus.

After this emperor, this policy⁴⁵ became more common in the periods of absence of troops, either due to the continuous civil wars or the need to nurture the *comitatus*.⁴⁶ The two Gothic invasions of Greece under the reigns of Gallienus and Claudius II proved the weakness of the Roman defensive system and the need for innovation. The best-known example is the Eastern border, which was entrusted to Odaenathus, exarch of Palmyra, under the title of *corrector totius Orientis* (*PIR*² S 339; *PLRE* I Odaenathus).

The marriage probably must have involved not only the defence of a section of the Danubian *limes* and the settlement in the part of Pannonia “granted” to king Attalus, but also the provision of troops attached to Gallienus’ *comitatus*, led by a Marcomannic chieftain with a close connection to the emperor’s military staff. This procedure will become an increasingly common practice during the second half of the third century.

Thus, for example, we have evidence of two, possibly three Herulian leaders in the literary sources at this time: *Naulobatus* (*PIR*² N 35; *PLRE* I Naulobatus), who received, as Odaenathus once did, the *ornamenta consularia* from Gallienus (Syncell. 717 Bonn); and *Bibulus*

For similar events, Fitz 1966, 36 f. and Altheim 1938, 204 trace the practice back to Marcus Aurelius, cf. however Van Berchem 1956, 13 f. Nevertheless, it is with Gallienus when we can truly speak of a “policy” as it becomes a recurring strategy: Geiger 2015, 332; 335 f. describes it as novel due to it being a long-term plan instead of temporary and circumstantial solutions (see next footnote). For a list of barbarian settlements in the Roman territory from Tiberius to Honorius, see Williams–Friell 1994, 190 f.

⁴⁴ See Schmidt 1939, 179–181 for a history of the Marcomannic people in the third century.

⁴⁵ Literary sources, as is common, do not explain or imply any policy but rather “incidental and independent” cases, De Blois 1976, 34 n. 53.

⁴⁶ Geiger 2015, 335; Speidel 2006, 74 f.; Altheim 1938, 204. Pannonia itself was the setting for another barbarian settlement not long after: that of the Carpiian people (Amm. Marc. 28. 1. 5) at the initiative of Diocletian after a military victory over that nation (*Pan. Lat.* 8[4]. 10. 4).

and *Andonnoballus* (*PIR*² A 581; *PLRE* I Andonnoballus), both in service of Claudius II (Petr. Patr. F 188–189 Banchich).⁴⁷ Similarly, we know of a certain *Pompeianus* “*cognomento Francus*”, general under Aurelian during his campaign against Zenobia who finally settled in Antioch (Hier. *Chron.* 306 e; *PIR*² P 439; *PLRE* I Pompeianus 1),⁴⁸ as well as a usurper of Frankish roots, Bonosus, who had his support bases in this nation (SHA *Quadr. tyr.* 13. 4).⁴⁹ Other more spurious passages point to other Germanic and Eastern peoples.⁵⁰

The repeated application of this policy with client states suggests that it was a successful strategy. The fact that we do not have more evidence of campaigns on the *Marcomanni* implies this.⁵¹ Nevertheless, in none of the mentioned cases is there an explicit granting of territory or, more correctly,

⁴⁷ “Bibulus”, despite the name, is deduced as such from his interaction with Andonnoballus in the cited passage; “Bibulus must refer to some German”, Banchich 2015, 126. The Latin name, if not another adaptation, is reminiscent of that of the Cheruscan princes *Flavus* and *Italicus*, Segimer’s son and grandson respectively (Tac. *Ann.* 2. 9–10; 11. 16–17), as well as another *Italicus*, king of the Suebians (Tac. *Hist.* 3. 5; 3. 21), and *Septimius Philippus* and *Septimius Heliodorus*, king Aistimodius’ brothers (*CIL* III, 4453), from which it could be inferred that he was a second-generation philo-Roman aristocrat. Another example is the Frankish Pompeianus.

⁴⁸ Where his offspring proliferated, among whom Jerome mentions the priest *Evagrius* (*ibidem*; Lib. *Ep.* LXX 251; *PLRE* Evagrius 6). On the credibility of the testimonies regarding the Frankish people before the reign of Probus, see Barnes 1994, who however does not resolve the notice about Pompeianus, 18; cf. Watson 1999, 168, who does not doubt his barbarian condition. We will add that the name of one of Evagrius’ brothers, *Miccalus* (*PLRE* I Miccalus), recalls the name *Micca*, the alleged Gothic father of Maximinus the Thracian (*Maximin.* 1. 5; *PIR*² M 586).

⁴⁹ The source, however, could not be more dubious, see Barnes 1994, 15: “The Quadrigae Tyrannorum is virtually total fiction and nothing can be presumed authentic beyond the bare names of the usurpers Firmus, Saturninus, Proculus and Bonosus”.

⁵⁰ Examples are the four Gothic-named generals entrusted by Valerian to a young Aurelian (SHA *Aur.* 11. 4) or the Persian auxiliary troops in the field army of some emperors, Altheim 1938, 188 f. In a different approach, Hartmann 2006, 116 f. does not see a political continuity under Gallienus’ successors but a rupture, with barbarian diplomacy being one of the grievances among the generals who plotted against the emperor in 268. Although we do not share this position, we must say it coincides with the data provided by Aurelius Victor and the *HA* that the concubinage with Pipara was a trigger for the Postumus’ uprising in Gaul.

⁵¹ With the only exception of the Germanic invasion of Italy attributed by the *HA* to these people under Aurelian (*Aur.* 18–21), wrongly, Syme 1980, 263 f. (= 1983, 154 f.); Schmidt 1938, 180.

a settlement on Roman territory beyond Zosimus' account and still less a marriage alliance. If the handing over of territory as a "dowry", as the *Epitome* suggests, was the condition for such a union in Pannonia, why did not Gallienus or a relative marry a Frankish or Alamannic princess?

It is logical to affirm that the marriage proposal had to arise on the part of the barbarian king, therefore putting him in a position of equality, if not superiority.⁵² Whether Alamannic or Frankish, we can say the same for Zosimus' unnamed Germanic chieftain. That is why we cannot include political marriage within this new border policy, continued by Gallienus' successors throughout the second half of the third century. Instead, the marriage or concubinage between the princess and the emperor must remain anecdotal, probably driven by specific circumstances that are unknown to us. The brevity and sometimes unreliability of the literary sources preserved for the period of the military anarchy are to be blamed. They are unreliable not only because of the animosity against Gallienus in the Latin historiographic tradition but also because none of the authors who opened the article – Aurelius Victor, the Epitomator and the *HA*'s biographer – were close in time to the events they describe, and certainly they or their sources could have had other marriages in mind, such as that of Arcadius and the Frankish Eudoxia.⁵³

V. Conclusion

To sum up, we can state that the testimonies on Pipa or Pipara, concubine or wife of Gallienus, combine a broader defence policy with the circumstantial and anecdotal detail of a marriage alliance with the daughter of a foreign leader. Parallels can only be found in some spurious notices. The most similar is perhaps the case of the anonymous daughters of queen Zenobia, settled in Rome after their mother's defeat in 272 and married to illustrious Romans, one of them being emperor Aurelian himself, according to Zonaras (12. 27). Nevertheless, we cannot infer another bigamous marriage in the account because the author does not mention the known wife of Aurelian, the Augusta Ulpia Severina (*PIR*²

⁵² See n. 13 on the hypothesis of Pipara as a hostage.

⁵³ See Estrada San Juan 2021 for how Pipara and Gallienus' notice could have been drawn by historians, as a literary device and more than a century after the event, after other marriages between Romans and barbarians, aside from its historical background which is the matter that has occupied us here. See also Bleckmann 1992, 258 f., esp. n. 146.

V 586; *PLRE* I Severina 2). Also, unlike Gallienus, in this case it is the emperor who was in an advantageous position after defeating Zenobia. A reminiscence of Alexander the Great is quite plausible.

Furthermore, the episode is too succinct and largely biased. The lack of clarity among scholars is due in part to the three sources being heirs to the *EKG*, wrongly assuming a single tradition, among which is the *HA*, probably the most reviled literary text of Latin historiography (not without reason). We have no doubt that if the passage which upgrades Pipa's concubinage to marriage were not given by the *Epitome* but by the *HA*, it would have been refuted and forgotten; and, in fact, the most striking discrepancy in the biographer's account, which is the name "Pipara", has been mercilessly condemned.

So, as we have attested, there is no need to immediately discard any striking contrast nor to hold a prejudice concerning this specific issue between the three sources (or, more aptly, the two traditions we have distinguished). After all, the two dates provided by them do match the most accepted historical record. And the divergence regarding the name of the princess is not an intentional modification or degradation from "Pipa" to "Pipara" or vice versa but probably two derivatives of the same root.

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Abbreviations

*PIR*² = E. Groag, A. Stein, L. Petersen (eds.), *Prosopographia Imperii Romani Saec. I, II, III* (Berlin 1933–2015).
PLRE I = A. H. M. Jones, J. R. Martindale, J. Morris (eds.), *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire I. A.D. 260–395* (Cambridge 1971).

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Princess Pipa of the Marcomanni, alleged wife or concubine of emperor Gallienus, is a character known to us through four references in three late sources. The information they provide is scarce and difficult to interpret, despite the fact that she is an important part of the alliance formed between these Germanic people and the Empire. In this article, these passages are interpreted in detail, while trying to reconstruct the historiographical tradition and relating the contribution of modern scholars regarding the historical setting of the alliance and the possible bigamous marriage implied by one of the sources.

О Пипе, принцессе маркоманнов, предположительно супруге или наложнице императора Галлиена, сохранилось четыре упоминания в трех поздних источниках, которые сообщают скудные и трудные для истолкования сведения. Между тем, Пипа играла важную роль в заключении союза этого германского народа с Римской империей. В статье дается по возможности полный комментарий к дошедшим пассажам, предпринимается попытка реконструировать историографическую традицию и оценить вклад современных ученых в вопросы об исторической обстановке при заключении союза и возможности двоеженства Галлиена, на которое намекает один из источников.

CONSPECTUS

ELENA ERMOLAEVA	
Odysseus as a Target in the <i>Odyssey</i> and Aeschylus' Fr. 179, 180 Radt (On the History of Greek Parody)	165
SALVATORE TUFANO	
With or without a <i>koinon</i> . The <i>Longue Durée</i> of Two Regional Festivals. I. The Pamboiotia and the Basileia from their Beginnings to the Fourth Century BC	176
NICHOLAS LANE	
A Conjecture on Pindar, <i>Pythian</i> 2. 81–82	196
GAUTHIER LIBERMAN	
Petits riens sophocléens : Antigone II (V. 162–169, 189–190, 203–204, 207–208, 241–242, 253–254, 289–290, 320–321, 370–375, 389–390, 392–393, 413–414, 444–445, 497–501) ..	203
VSEVOLOD ZELTCHENKO	
What is Wrong with Nicostratus? (Ar. <i>Vesp.</i> 82–83)	228
GLEB L. KRIVOLAPOV	
Dionysus or Heracles: Mark Antony's Religious Policy in 41 BCE in the Light of <i>Epistula Marci Antonii Ad Koinon Asiae</i>	242
HEIKO ULLRICH	
Eine Konjektur zu Lukrez 3, 917	266
MIKHAIL SHUMILIN	
Unpublished Conjectures to the <i>Appendix Vergiliana</i> by F. Korsch, G. Saenger, and A. Sonny	276
HANAN M. I. ISMAIL	
The Date of <i>P. Alex.</i> Inv. 622, Page 28. A Papyrus from Herakleidou Meris in the Arsinoite Nome	289
GABRIEL ESTRADA SAN JUAN	
Pipa and Gallienus	299
Keywords	321