The status of Serena and the Stilicho diptych

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One of the best known (and best preserved) of late-antique ivories is what is generally known as the Stilicho diptych, kept in the tesoro of the cathedral at Monza. It represents a military man with a spear and shield on one panel, and, on the other, a high-ranking woman holding a flower above the head of a small boy, not more than 10 years old; he stands between them wearing a *chlamys* and holding the codicils of office in his left hand (fig. 1). Ever since the basic article by C. Jullian more than 130 years ago,¹ it has been generally accepted that the only candidates who fit this description are the western *magister utriusque militiae* Stilicho (d. 408), his wife Serena, the niece and (according to Claudian) adoptive daughter of Theodosius I, and their son Eucherius, appointed to the office of *tribunus et notarius* in (probably) 395/6.²

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² See the entry for Eucherius in *PLRE* II.404.