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POWER AND
STATUS IN
THE ROMAN
EMPIRE,
AD 193-284

Inge Mennen

BRILL

Power and Status in the Roman Empire, AD 193–284

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By
Inge Mennen



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CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	vii
Abbreviations	ix
List of Tables and Figures	xi
Notes to the Reader	xiii
Introduction	1
Chapter One. Changing Emperorship: Setting the Scene	21
1.1. Factors Influencing Emperorship between AD 193 and 284 ..	22
1.2. Consequences for the Position of the Emperor	40
1.3. Conclusion	46
Chapter Two. The Impact of Crises on the Position of the Senatorial Elite	49
2.1. Establishing the Senatorial Elite in the Third Century.....	50
2.2. Analyzing the Selected Families	55
2.3. Defining a Nucleus within the Senatorial Elite	70
2.4. Conclusion	79
Excursus. Prosopography of the Senatorial Elite Families.....	83
Chapter Three. Praetorian Prefects and Other High-ranking Equestrians	135
3.1. The Increasing Responsibilities of High Equestrians in Imperial Administration	137
3.2. The Status of High-ranking Equestrians in the Third Century	156
3.3. The <i>praefecti praetorio</i> : A Case Study.....	159
3.4. Conclusion	188

Chapter Four. High-ranking Military Officers: Septimius Severus versus Gallienus	193
4.1. Septimius Severus and His Military Officers	194
4.2. Gallienus and His Military Officers	216
4.3. Conclusion	240
Conclusion	247
Appendix One. List of Emperors and Usurpers (AD 193–284)	255
Appendix Two. Lists of Men Holding Senatorial Elite Positions between AD 193 and 284	257
Appendix Three. List of <i>Praefecti Praetorio</i> between AD 193 and 284	263
Bibliography	269
General Index	289
Index of Ancient Persons	297

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ABBREVIATIONS

AAntHung	<i>Acta Antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae</i>
AE	<i>L'Année épigraphique</i>
AJPh	<i>American Journal of Philology</i>
ANRW	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i>
BJ	<i>Bonner Jahrbücher des Rheinischen Landesmuseums in Bonn und Vereins von Altertumsfreunden im Rheinlande</i>
BMCRE	H. Mattingly, C.H.V. Sutherland, E.A. Sydenham et al., <i>Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum</i> (London and Oxford 1923–)
CAH	<i>The Cambridge Ancient History</i> (Cambridge 1923–)
CCG	<i>Cahiers du Centre Gustave-Glotz</i>
CIL	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum</i>
Cod. Iust.	<i>Codex Iustinianus</i> , ed. P. Krueger (Berlin 1900–1905)
CP	<i>Classical Philology</i>
CQ	<i>Classical Quarterly</i>
CR	<i>Classical Review</i>
DNP	H. Cancik, H. Schneider, M. Landfester (eds.), <i>Der Neue Pauly. Enzyklopädie der Antike. 13 Bände Altertum A–Z, 5 Bände Rezeptions- und Wissensgeschichte A–Z, 1 Registerband</i> (Stuttgart and Weimar 1996–2003).
DoS	J. Scott and G. Marshall (eds.), <i>A Dictionary of Sociology</i> (3rd revised edition, Oxford 2009).
DSS	C.J. Calhoun (ed.), <i>Dictionary of the Social Sciences</i> (New York 2002).
HA	<i>Historia Augusta</i>
IEph	<i>Die Inschriften von Ephesos</i> (IGSK 11–17), 8 vols. (Bonn 1979–1984)
IESBS	N.J. Smelser, P.B. Baltes (eds.), <i>International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences</i> (Oxford 2002).
IG	<i>Inscriptiones Graecae</i> (Berlin 1903–)
IGBR	<i>Inscriptiones Graecae in Bulgaria Repertae</i>
IGRR	R. Cagnat, A. Merlin, L. Chatelain, <i>Inscriptiones Graecae ad Res Romanas Pertinentes</i> , 3 vols. (1, 3, 4) (Paris 1906–1927).
IL Afr	<i>Inscriptions latines d'Afrique (Tripolitaine, Tunisie, Maroc)</i> (Paris 1923)
IL Alg	<i>Inscriptions latines de l'Algérie</i> (1922–)
ILS	H. Dessau (ed.), <i>Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae</i> , 3 vols. (Berlin 1892–1916).

IMEM	<i>Proceedings of the Workshop of the International Network Impact of Empire (Roman Empire c. 200 BC–AD 476).</i>
Inscr. It.	<i>Inscriptiones Italiae</i> (Rome 1931–1986).
IRT	J.M. Reynolds and J.B. Ward-Perkins, <i>The Inscriptions of Roman Tripolitania</i> (Rome 1952).
JRA	<i>Journal of Roman Archaeology</i>
JRS	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
LCL	<i>Loeb Classical Library</i>
MEFRA	<i>Mélanges de l'École française de Rome: Antiquité</i>
OCD	S. Hornblower, A. Spawforth (eds.), <i>The Oxford Classical Dictionary</i> (third revised edition, Oxford 2003).
ODE	C. Soanes, A. Stevenson (eds.), <i>Oxford Dictionary of English</i> (second edition, Oxford 2003).
PBA	<i>Proceedings of the British Academy</i>
PIR	<i>Prosopographia Imperii Romani Saeculi I, II, III</i> (1897–1899, second edition 1933–)
PLRE	A.H.M. Jones, J.R. Martindale, J. Morris (eds.), <i>The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire</i> , 3 vols. (Cambridge 1971–1992).
<i>P. Giss.</i>	O. Eger et al., <i>Griechische Papyri im Museum des oberhessischen Geschichtsvereins zu Geissen</i> (Leipzig-Berlin 1910–1912).
<i>P. Oxy.</i>	B.P. Grenfell et al., <i>The Oxyrhynchus Papyri</i> (London 1898–).
RD	<i>Revue historique de droit français et étranger</i>
RE	A.F. Pauly, G. Wissowa and W. Kroll, <i>Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> (Munich 1894–1997).
REA	<i>Revue des études anciennes</i>
REL	<i>Revue des études latines</i>
RIB	R.G. Collingwood, R.P. Wright (eds.), <i>The Roman Inscriptions of Britain</i> , vol. 1 (1965, revised edition with <i>addenda</i> 1995).
SCI	<i>Scripta Classica Israelica</i>
SDHI	<i>Studia et Documenta Historiae et Iuris</i>
SEG	<i>Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum</i>
TAM	<i>Tituli Asiae Minoris</i> (Vienna 1901–)
ZPE	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i>

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

<i>Figure 2.1.</i> Schematic overview of strata within the senatorial order	50
<i>Table 2.1.</i> Representativeness of the selected families	54
<i>Table 2.2.</i> Geographic origin of the selected families	65
<i>Table 2.3.</i> Patrician status of the selected families	67
<i>Table 2.4.</i> Years in which the selected families reached consular rank	74
<i>Table E1.</i> The Acilii (Glabriones et Aviolae)	83
<i>Table E2.</i> The Anicii	86
<i>Table E3.</i> The Bruttii	89
<i>Table E4.</i> The Caesonii	91
<i>Table E5.</i> The Catii	93
<i>Table E6.</i> The Claudii Pompeiani	95
<i>Table E7.</i> The Claudii Severi	98
<i>Table E8.</i> The Egnatii	100
<i>Table E9.</i> The Fulvii Aemiliani	104
<i>Table E10.</i> The Hedii Lolliani	106
<i>Table E11.</i> The Marii	109
<i>Table E12.</i> The Nummii	112
<i>Table E13.</i> The Pollieni/Pollenii	116
<i>Table E14.</i> The Pomponii	118
<i>Table E15.</i> The Postumii	121
<i>Table E16.</i> The Valerii	123
<i>Table E17.</i> The Vettii	127
<i>Table E18.</i> The Virii	130
<i>Table 4.1.</i> Severus' supporters in 193	194
<i>Table 4.2.</i> Men involved in the battle against Niger	196
<i>Table 4.3.</i> Men involved in the first Parthian war	199
<i>Table 4.4.</i> Men involved in the battle against Albinus	201
<i>Table 4.5.</i> Men involved in the <i>expeditio Britannica</i>	208
<i>Table 4.6.</i> Men involved in military events in the West (260–262)	216
<i>Table 4.7.</i> Men involved in military events in the East (260–262)	222

<i>Table 4.8.</i> Gallienus' protectores	227
<i>Table 4.9.</i> Men involved in military events at the end of Gallienus' reign (267 / 268)	231

NOTES TO THE READER

Translations are taken from the *LCL*, unless otherwise noted. The numbering of Dio's *Roman History* follows the *LCL* edition.

'193/205' means that a person held a post for an unspecified period between 193 and 205. '193–205' means that a person held an office from 193 until 205.

INTRODUCTION

The reign of the emperor Diocletian is often considered a breaking point in Roman history.¹ Many administrative, military, and financial reforms, which together transformed the government of the Empire, were ascribed to this emperor and his colleagues. Clearly, the administration of the Empire from Diocletian onwards differed greatly from the way the realm was administered under the Antonine emperors in the second century AD. Beginning with the murder of the last Antonine emperor Commodus, the Empire experienced a period of increasing instability, as a growing number of internal and external military threats, epidemics, and banditry pressured the imperial treasury and the existing administrative system. Modern scholars have accepted that the events of the third century AD affected imperial appointment policies and social hierarchies and foreshadowed the reforms carried through by Diocletian; yet the process by which appointments and hierarchies changed, and particularly its effects on power and status relations, has hitherto remained understudied.² For a better understanding of the transformation from the early to late Empire, however, a thorough analysis of these aspects is essential. Since a single study cannot do justice to a theme so broad and so complex, the present study aims to contribute to the ongoing debate on both Roman imperial administration and the relations between individuals involving their use of power and status within the socio-political hierarchies in the context of the history of the third century AD.

¹ See, for instance, Barnes (1982), with additions in id. (1996); Rees (2004); Demandt-Goltz (2004).

² Cf. Salway (2006), 115–116: ‘The structures of early imperial and later antique government are not in doubt but neither the precise chronology nor the trajectory of the process by which the former was transformed into the latter is entirely clear.’ Illustrative is, for instance, the excellent volume by Swain and Edwards (2004), in which many aspects (economics, culture, Christians, pagan religion, philosophy) of the transition from what we call the early to the late Empire are discussed. Contributions on the changes in administration and social structures, however, are limited to specific case studies dealing with Egypt and Italy, and hardly go into the process as a whole. Cf. Christol (1997); John-Hartmann-Gerhardt (2008), 583–789. On Diocletian as extending and systematizing changes rather than being the initiator, see Bury (1913), 127.

Aim of the Present Study

In this study, I explore administration, appointment policies and social hierarchies in the period between AD 193 to 284, in order to define changing status and power relations between the highest ranking representatives of imperial power at the central level. The appointment of the emperor Pertinax, successor of Commodus, in 193 forms the starting point of the analysis; the accession of Diocletian in 284 marks the end. As said, the year 193 inaugurated a period in which many problems challenged imperial power. These internal and external difficulties had started to manifest themselves during the reign of Marcus Aurelius, but from 193 problems accumulated and increasingly afflicted the Empire and its rulers. In the second half of the third century, the difficulties culminated in what is often described as ‘the third-century crisis’. Although it is still debated whether the events of the third century are best described as a ‘crisis’,—whereas in certain areas of the Empire there was continuity and relative peace—, it is quite clear that the range of problems finally burdened both the execution of central imperial power and existing status and power relations beyond their capacities.³ For signs of tension became apparent during the reigns of the Severi, but the strains became exacerbated from 249 onwards, so that the reorganization of imperial administration was realized, or rather formalized, under Diocletian. I therefore consider it suitable to describe the third century as a period of crisis in the sphere of imperial power, and for that reason this chronological demarcation has been chosen for this study. Whether it was this period of instability which caused a reorganization of imperial administration and changes in social structures, or whether it revealed a process which had started off before, is not always easy to assess. As will become clear, in an era as hectic as the third century, in which numerous spectacular events were happening concurrently, it is often difficult for historians to trace dynamic forces, and to distinguish causality from correlation.

³ For a recent survey of the application of the term ‘crisis’, see Liebeschuetz (2007), who argues that the word crisis is an appropriate description of what happened in the third century. Cf. De Blois (2002). Liebeschuetz cites Witschel (1999), cf. id. (2004), as the most helpful critique of the ‘crisis model’. The model was also criticized by Strobel (1993).

Power and Status—Concepts and Their Definitions

Before proceeding to delineate the relevant source material and the methodology applied, the concepts ‘power’ and ‘status’ must be defined as they are used in the context of this study.⁴

Concerning the term ‘power’, it is relevant first to emphasize that we are dealing here with *political* power. Clearly there are many different theories of power which are available to modern historians.⁵ In general, one definition in the *Oxford Dictionary of English*, as ‘the capacity or ability to direct or influence the behaviour of others or the course of events,’ suits the context of this study.⁶ This definition is closely associated with the definition of Max Weber, who described power as the capacity of an actor within a social relationship to impose his will.⁷ Taking Weber’s definition as a starting point, several political scientists in the twentieth century developed the view of power as a type of social causation, leading to the definition of various dimensions through which power was theorized.⁸

Within the scope of this development the political scientist Robert Dahl initiated the power debate in the late 1950s, describing the process

⁴ It should be noted that theoretical frameworks of power and status are applied here as a means to analyze the ancient source material. In doing so, the universality of these theories will, of course, also be tested, although that is not the main purpose of this book.

⁵ Cf. Noreña (2006), in which he complains about ancient historians’ neglect to define ‘power’, and refers to the exemplary and influential formulations of Max Weber, Michel Foucault, and Michael Mann. For the application of Mann’s theory to antiquity see now Slootjes (2009).

⁶ ‘Power’, in *ODE*², 1380. This definition can be further specified by adding the sub-sense ‘political or social authority or control, especially that exercised by a government’. Cf. also the definition given by Goldhamer-Shills (1939), 171: ‘a person may be said to have *power* to the extent that he influences the behavior of others in accordance with his own intentions’, with the addition that ‘behavior is here to be understood as both covert and overt behavior. Influence is to be understood as both an alteration of behavior and a maintenance of behavior as it was, but other than what it would have been without the intervention of the power-holder.’

⁷ Weber (1978), 53, where he describes power as ‘the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests’ (*Macht* bedeutet jede Chance, innerhalb einer sozialen Beziehung den eigenen Willen auch gegen Widerstreben durchzusetzen, gleichviel worauf diese Chance beruht.).

⁸ Lukes (1974) came up with the term ‘dimensions’ (also ‘faces’) of power, referring to previous power theories as one-dimensional and two-dimensional views. Here, the main theories and main representatives of these views will be discussed. For a more detailed discussion of the power debate, see Lukes (2005), 1–13.

of power as follows: 'A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do.'⁹ Dahl furthermore associates power-as-causation with four aspects of power: 1. *base* (the resources or means that A uses to cause changes in others' behavior); 2. *amount* (some instances of power refer to greater changes in behavior than others); 3. *domain* (those persons subject to the actor's power); and 4. *scope* (the matters subject to the actor's power).¹⁰

Dahl and his followers became known as stating a pluralist model of power, finding power to be fragmented among various scopes and domains, as opposed to the concentration of power within a single elite.¹¹ The pluralist view was criticized by Peter Bachrach and Morton Baratz, who claim that non-decisions should also be taken into consideration while analyzing power. This critical view of pluralism includes agenda-setting by elites who worked away from public scrutiny, and introduces the notion of potential issues, which non-decision-making prevent from being actual.¹²

Steven Lukes, in his *Power: A Radical View*, adds a third dimension of power: preference-shaping.¹³ According to Lukes, both Dahl's one-dimensional, pluralist view, and the two-dimensional view of Bachrach and Baratz, are limited, first, in that they focus only on observable conflicts, whether overt or covert, and secondly, because they are too committed to behaviorism, whereas inaction can also follow from socially structured and culturally patterned collective behavior. Lukes argues that it is important to investigate the power to prevent the formation of grievances by shaping perceptions, cognitions, and preferences in such a way as to ensure the acceptance of a certain role in the existing order. In other words, in examining the concept of power, Lukes considered it

⁹ Dahl (1957), 202–203; see also Dahl (1961). Cf. Lukes (2005), 166–167, where he calls this debate the 'faces of power' debate, and sums up some other debates.

¹⁰ Summarized by McFarland in *IESBS*, s.v. Power: Political, 11936–11937; cf. Dahl (1957), 203; id. (1968), 407–409. Dahl himself calls these aspects 'dimensions of power'. To avoid confusion with the power dimensions as defined by Lukes (1974, re-issued 2005), Dahl's term has been changed here.

¹¹ Two much discussed books in the 1950s and 1960s, in which we find the Ruling Elite Model are Hunter (1953) and Mills (1956). Cf. Dahl's critique on this model in Dahl (1958).

¹² Bachrach-Baratz (1970). See Lukes (2005), 5–6, for other critics of the pluralist model of power.

¹³ Lukes (1974, re-issued 2005). For a summary of Lukes' critiques on the views of Dahl and of Bachrach and Baratz, see Lorenzi (2006).

relevant to ask ourselves: how do the powerful secure the willing compliance of those they dominate?¹⁴

Following Lukes' third dimension of power, Michel Foucault's work can be considered a fourth dimension of power.¹⁵ Yet, in summarizing Foucault's view of power it should be taken into consideration that different emphases on power occur throughout the course of his work and that it is necessary to uncouple his sociological from his philosophical view. In general, we can say that Foucault's works analyze the link between power, knowledge and truth. He claims that power presupposed freedom in the sense that power-holders are looking for ways of making people by themselves behave in other ways than they would have done otherwise. One way of doing this is by threatening with violence, but this goal can also be achieved by suggesting what the benefits of an action would be. Furthermore, Foucault outlines a form of covert power, organic within society. According to this view, political power is part of a series of societal controls and 'normalizing' influences through historical institutions and definitions—or discourses—, in which certain ideas are considered undeniable 'truths'.¹⁶ This view of power is less rigid than the other three, but also less effective in the context of this study, which aims at an empirical, socio-political rather than a discursive, philosophical analysis of power relations.¹⁷

The other three views of power discussed here, those of Dahl, Bachrach and Baratz, and Lukes, have a common underlying concept of power, a basic common core to their mention of power in the analysis of social relationships, that is that power is the capacity to make a difference. Although the two- and three-dimensional power views of Bachrach and Baratz, and Lukes respectively, clearly add to our understanding

¹⁴ Lukes (2005), 11–12. Lukes' third dimension built upon Antonio Gramsci's concept of ideology in the form of the notion of 'hegemony'. Gramsci (1971), elaborating on Marxist ideas, argued that it was 'culture' or 'ideology' that constituted 'the mode of class rule secured by consent'. Cf. Althusser (1970); Anderson (1976–1977), 42; Lukes (2005), 7.

¹⁵ Digesser (1992). Cf. Lukes (2005), 88.

¹⁶ See, for instance, Foucault (1980), 38. For Foucault's ideas on power, see also Foucault (1975); Id. (1976); Id. (2000). Habermas opposed himself to Foucault's conception of discourse as a battlefield for power relations. See Kelly (1994) on the debate.

¹⁷ Foucault's concern was with 'with structural relationships, institutions, strategies and techniques rather than with concrete policies and the actual people they involve.' Lukes (2005), 89. Cf. Garland (1990), 138: 'His (i.e. Foucault's, IM) special focus is always upon the way these power relations are organized [...] rather than upon the groups and individuals who dominate or are dominated as a consequence.'

of the concept of power and will be referred to in this study where applicable, these notions are in fact developments of Dahl's basic one-dimensional view. Since Dahl's view of power, with its definition of four power aspects that are observable in the available source material on the third century AD, serves well as a practical point of departure for the interpretation of the data, it is his theory which will be used in this study as the central basis of the analysis of shifting power relations within the socio-political elite between AD 193 and 284.

If we apply the concept of 'power' to the administration of the Roman Empire, at the top of administration of course stood the emperor, who had absolute power. However, he deployed imperial power for the most part indirectly, imperial officials being used to execute his power throughout the Empire. All these men, whose delegated *imperium* associated them with the emperor, also shared in imperial power. A relevant matter in this context is awareness of power. A person's awareness of his own power, and the awareness others have of his power, largely define a person's position within society. Awareness links power to the other concept dealt with in this study: status.

In general terms, status can be described as a person's 'relative social or professional position'.¹⁸ In the context of this study, we are dealing with *social* status, i.e. the prestige attached to one's position in a social hierarchy.¹⁹ Both sociologists and anthropologists have since long been concerned with questions of status and social stratification. Max Weber defined status position as 'the effective claim to social esteem in terms of positive or negative privileges'.²⁰ According to Weber, status is typically based on a special life-style and expressed through and maintained by exclusionary practices such as marriage, conventions and customs, and

¹⁸ 'Status', in *ODE*², 1728.

¹⁹ In sociology, two meanings have been given to the word 'status'. It either refers to 'the position that a person occupies in the social structure, such as teacher or priest', or it refers to 'a form of social stratification in which social positions are ranked and organized by legal, political, and cultural criteria into status groups' (*DoS*, s.v. Status). The anthropologist Linton (1936) introduced the former sense, the idea of status as a position in a social structure, distinguishing it from the notion of social role, which is the behavior expected of people in a status, encompassing all culturally prescribed rights and duties inherent in social positions. Cf. *DSS* s.v. Status, 464; *IESBS*, s.v. Social Psychology of Status and Role, 15091. Obviously, in the present study, which focuses on social hierarchies, the latter meaning of status as a form of social stratification is applied. On status and social stratification see also Turner (1988) and Scott (1996) on the wider issues.

²⁰ Weber (1978), 305: 'Ständische Lage soll heißen eine typisch wirksam in Anspruch genommene positive oder negative Privilegierung in der sozialen Schätzung.'

common living arrangements. A set of persons with a common status position form a status group which enjoys a common esteem and certain status monopolies over the resources of the group.²¹ Weber's concept of status group described communities whose prestige derives from cultural rather than economic or political factors, and was thus based on ideas of proper lifestyles. People in these communities are supposed to associate with people of like status; people outside these communities were looked at as inferiors.²²

In his theory, Weber furthermore drew a distinction between achieved status and ascribed status. He defined achieved status as a social position based on individual merits or accomplishments, acquired by a person during his or her lifetime as a result of the exercise of knowledge, ability and skills, and achieved through education, career, marital status or other forms of social distinction. Ascribed status, by contrast, is an individual's inherited social position, fixed at birth and based on gender, age, ethnic group and family background. It should be noted, however, that the distinction between achievement and ascription is by no means absolute.²³

In the late 1970s, Pierre Bourdieu followed up on the dimension of social stratification defined by Weber emphasizing the role of 'cultural capital' in the negotiation of class positions. Bourdieu claimed that social

²¹ In his work, Weber developed the line of analysis of Henry Maine (1861) that law and society developed 'from status to contract'. According to this thesis, individuals in the ancient world were tightly bound to traditional groups by status, while in the modern world individuals are autonomous agents, free to make contracts with whomever they choose. Weber acknowledged that status groups were more visible in preindustrial societies, where exclusive culture differences and practices could be more strictly controlled. In modern sociology, Weber's distinction between status society and class society became less sharp as both the concepts class and status came to be used interchangeably 'to measure subjective evaluations of positions in a system of social stratification' (*DoS*, s.v. Status).

²² Weber's theory of stratification is an example of conflict theory, in which society is seen as an arena in which people compete for power, wealth, and prestige. In the 1940s and 1950s, the structural functionalism theory, aspects of which were inspired by the ideas of Herbert Spencer and Emile Durkheim, argued to interpret society as a structure with interrelated parts, constituent elements such as traditions and institutions, 'organs' working toward a proper functioning of the 'body' as a whole. Cf. Urry (2000), 23. In the 1960s, functionalism was criticized for being static and unable to account for social change. By the 1980s, functionalism was largely replaced by more conflict-oriented approaches, and later by 'structuralism', 'poststructuralism' and finally by middle-range theory, an approach integrating theory and empirical research. See, for instance, Slattery (2003), on these developments.

²³ Cf. *DoS*, s.v. Achieved status.

classes of a society have a habit of distinction: they want to distance themselves from other, lower, social groups by their aesthetic taste, their choices in, for instance, education, foods, clothing and music.²⁴ Bourdieu argues that this aesthetic taste was internalized at an early age, guiding young people towards their appropriate social positions. He introduced the sociological concept of cultural capital, referring to non-financial social property such as educational or intellectual assets. Bourdieu's cultural capital 'acts as a social relation within a system of exchange that includes the accumulated cultural knowledge that confers power and status.'²⁵ Bourdieu claims that economic capital (wealth) and social capital (social network), although achieved cumulatively over time, largely depend upon social origin and cultural capital.²⁶

In Roman society, status was largely connected with social rank. The separate strata of Roman society were not static: individuals could move up the social ladder if they had enough money or sufficient military or administrative skills. In this sense, Weber's achieved and ascribed status can be deduced from the ancient sources. Success stories of soldiers from the auxiliary units and freedmen who eventually gained Roman citizenship and/or wealth are ample, but for the purpose of this study the advancement of military cadre officers into the equestrian order and the entry of *equites* into the senatorial order are most significant.²⁷ Noble birth was an important criterion for admittance into the senate, but as leading families regularly died out or fell into disgrace, the community had to be constantly regenerated from below.²⁸ Upward advancement could take one or even several generations: a freed slave could not hold office, but his son or grandson could, for instance, obtain a local magistracy and gain access to the equestrian or senatorial order for future generations. Although it is hard to quantify the extent of social mobility accurately, it was a reality within Roman social structure, even if only for a small minority.

Bourdieu's notion of cultural capital, determining one's role in the social hierarchy, is somewhat related to the concept of *paideia* (Gr. παι-

²⁴ Bourdieu (1984). Cf. Bourdieu (1989), 19–20.

²⁵ Barker (2004), 37.

²⁶ Bourdieu (1984), *passim*.

²⁷ A *primuspilus* (or *primipilus*), the highest ranking centurion of a legion, for instance, was as a rule accepted into the equestrian order immediately after serving in this rank for a year, thus attracting further opportunities for advancement. See *DNP*, s.v. *primuspilus*; cf. s.v. *centurio*; Dobson (1978).

²⁸ Hopkins (1978); Burton and Hopkins in Hopkins (1983), 120–200.

δεία, Lat. *humanitas*) in antiquity, which refers to both the process of raising and educating and to the result, the education, of the elite. In the later republic, as Rome's contacts with the Greek-speaking world grew, the Romans assumed a predominantly Greek pattern of education, encompassing theoretical and practical upbringing and cultural training in the widest sense.²⁹ The traditional elite of the Roman Empire, especially the group of born senators, regarded *paideia* as an essential asset of any elite member of society. *Paideia* connected the members of the senatorial elite to each other and guaranteed cultural homogeneity between them, defining the upper-class status group: anyone who lacked the appropriate *paideia* was considered inferior by the senatorial elite.³⁰ Inevitably, the rise of a new military elite in the third century shook up the traditional elite and coerced—or, as this study aims to demonstrate, enabled—, this elite to redefine its position within the socio-political hierarchies.

Like power, status was thus multi-dimensional: factors such as birth, age, gender, education, experience, ability, wealth, lifestyle and legal condition defined a person's status profile. When a person scores highly on some status criteria but not on others, this inconsistency in status evaluation is called status dissonance by sociologists.³¹ A social upstart like Trimalchio, who appears in Petronius' *Satyricon*, for instance, may have been just as wealthy as any senator, but could never become a senator.³² Status dissonance exposes the difficulty of status evaluation: it was a relative process. How people saw each other and reacted to one another would have depended significantly on their own status, for status varied enormously depending on the observer and on the place. Or, to

²⁹ Aristocratic Roman families often employed Greek-speaking tutors to teach their children both Greek and Latin; competence in both languages remained a feature of an upper-class education until the fifth century AD. Besides elementary reading and writing, the education of children of wealthy families included an advanced study of both language and poetry and occasionally philosophy, and a rhetorical training. On education in ancient Rome, see Bonner (1977). Cf. on the ideal of *paideia* in the Roman world, Harris (1989), *passim*.

³⁰ On the link between politics and *paideia*, see Brown (1992), 35–70. Although Brown focuses on the period between AD 300 and AD 450, most of his arguments on the importance attached to *paideia* by the Roman upper-class apply to the third century as well. Cf. the grammarian Lollianus' petition (dated ca. 258–259), quoted by Brown at p. 35 (note 1), in which Lollianus addresses the emperors Gallienus and Valerianus, praising their *paideia*.

³¹ Hopkins (1978), 108–111. Cf. Weaver (1978), who describes the case of slaves and freedmen who served the emperor: they had access to power and influence, but never lost their stigma of servitude.

³² Petronius, *Satyricon* 26–41; 47–79.

put it in other words: the status accorded to a person ‘depends on the value hierarchy held by the individual making the status judgment, and the individual’s knowledge of the characteristics of the person judged.’³³

Thus, the observation of status in the ancient source material is more problematic than the observation of power.³⁴ Whereas status evaluation of individuals in antiquity is highly problematic, conclusions about the status of the *ordines* can be drawn.³⁵ As will become clear in this study, status is undeniably linked to power: changes in one of Dahl’s four aspects of power, sooner or later led to changes in status relations between power-holders.

Representatives of Imperial Power

Roman imperial power at the central level was mediated by men belonging to the upper strata of Roman society. This situation has famously been schematically illustrated by Alföldy through a social pyramid with the emperor at the top, surrounded by senators and equestrians, the privileged classes who shared in power and prestige and filled the most important and honorific governmental posts.³⁶

As is obviously well-known, in republican times, the senate had been the traditional ruling body of Rome which provided governing magistrates. In imperial times, the senate continued to play a role in government, although service to the state increasingly meant service to the emperor.³⁷ In the first three centuries AD the senate had about six hundred members whose entry into the *ordo* depended first on a minimum value of one million sesterces and second on election to key offices. In principle the senate was responsible for the election of new members, yet in fact election was by the emperor, who could also appoint his own nom-

³³ Goldhamer-Shills (1939), 181, cf. 179. Cf. Purcell (1983), 126; Garnsey-Saller (1987), 118; Hope (2000), 149–150; see Hope (2000), 144–146, for a detailed discussion of Trimalchio’s position within Roman social structure.

³⁴ Cf. Finley (1985), 51, who admits that status itself is a vague word and an imprecise concept.

³⁵ Hopkins (1978) 105–107. Cf. Hope (2000), 126: ‘... the definition of an individual’s status involved complex and sometimes contradictory and contested factors, which could be compounded by the geographic and chronological breadth of the Empire. It is thus often impossible to provide a finite definition of an individual’s status.’

³⁶ Alföldy (1988), 106. The *decuriones* who also belonged to the upper strata according to Alföldy’s pyramid are not mentioned here, as they mediated imperial power at the local instead of the central level.

³⁷ Alföldy (1988), 102; cf. Talbert (1984).

inees. The senate was not a hereditary body, but many sons of senators followed their father's footsteps, and the privileges of the office endured for three generations.³⁸ Senators were deployed in all kind of spheres: they held civil-administrative, military, legal, and financial positions. In some posts, for instance provincial governorships, various kinds of duties were combined. It should be taken into account that the senate had its own internal hierarchy. Successful senators could reach the prestigious office of consul. Even more successful were those senators who continued their careers after the consulate. Those who held a second consulship or shared their consulate with the emperor as their colleague, and those who were appointed to govern the provinces of Africa and Asia as *proconsules*, or were made responsible for the capital as *praefectus urbi*, reached the pinnacle of the senatorial *cursus honorum*, and can surely be counted as the top layer of the senatorial class.

The second order was of course the equestrian one, which was considerably larger than the senatorial order. As with the senatorial order, membership of the equestrian order depended on a man's wealth; from Augustus onwards, the minimum property requirement was 400,000 sesterces. The formal method of entry was by imperial grant. Many wealthy provincials qualified for membership, but only a minority actually pursued a political or military career. Like senators, *equites* could hold all kind of posts, but during the Principate differentiation between financial-legal careers and military careers gradually emerged. The most successful *equites* reached the posts of *praefectus annonae* (responsible for the corn supply of Rome), *praefectus Aegypti* (governor of Egypt), and *praefectus praetorio* (commanding the praetorian cohorts), which formed the summit of the equestrian career.

In the Augustan era, Roman citizens residing in Rome and Italy monopolized all high positions in central government, while wealthy provincials settled for local offices. The privileged position of those based in the Italic peninsula which was the original basis of the Empire, however, gradually became less important to the emperors than the political and administrative unification of the Empire. By the third century, leading provincials from all corners of the Empire competed for traditional Roman honors and were steadily assimilated into the Roman higher orders.³⁹ This process is demonstrated well by the origins of the emperors: the first emperors were Romans; by the end of the first century an

³⁸ *Digesta* 23, 2, 44.

³⁹ See especially Halfmann (1979).

emperor born in Spain reached the imperial throne; by the end of the second century the Empire had an emperor born in Africa; and a few decades later a man born in Syria ruled the Empire.

Again, we should not forget the diversity inherent within this upper section of the hypothetical pyramid. Even within the *ordines*, heterogeneity should be taken into account.⁴⁰ Therefore, I have focused on the highest layers within the upper strata of Roman society, the group which formed the political elite of the Empire: the emperors themselves, the senatorial nucleus, and high equestrians who served as senior military officers in the army and as senior civil administrators. Senators who did not reach the consulship, and lower equestrian specialized administrators in the provinces are not included.⁴¹ This choice is motivated, first by the crucial functions of this top elite in the third-century's developing administrative system, second by the emphasis on the political elite in the available evidence, and finally by the socio-political events in the early fourth century: under the emperor Constantine, the equestrian and senatorial orders were fused into one new expanded order of *clarissimi*. As before, entry into this highest order was based upon a combination of hereditary expectation, property requirement, and actual tenure of key offices or imperial grant. How certain events of the third century diminished the distinctions between the high equestrians and senators and foreshadowed this fusion will become clear in this study.

Source Material

The available source material for this study can be divided into three main categories: 1. 'memorial epigraphy';⁴² 2. historiographic evidence; 3. administrative documents and writings.

The largest corpus of evidence consists of memorial inscriptions. Such epigraphic texts recorded names of officials, their functions, and often part or even the whole of their *cursus honorum*. These inscriptions were entrusted to non-perishable material, such as stone or bronze, and were

⁴⁰ Cf. Hope (2000), 137.

⁴¹ Imperial slaves and freedmen, whose influence corresponded primarily to their respective proximity to the center of power, the emperor and his family, are excluded as well, as their power was based on informal authority and as there are hardly any objective sources available which can clarify the impact of their influence.

⁴² This designation is based on Eck (2002a), 134. Cf. Eck (2009), in which he argues against the term *cursus honorum* inscriptions.

explicitly meant to be seen by the public in order to state a person's socio-political position. Funerary inscriptions, honorary inscriptions, building inscriptions, dedications to divinities, military diplomas, and milestone inscriptions fall into this category. Recovered in a variety of contexts, they were displayed on behalf of all senior representatives of imperial power. Inasmuch as they represent all social layers examined in this study, and were intended to reflect officials' socio-political rank, they provide valuable evidence for this study.⁴³ Some remarks, however, should be made on the Roman epigraphic habit. As MacMullen has noted in his outline of the contours of this epigraphic habit in both Latin West and Greek East, the number of inscriptions grew steadily over the first and second centuries AD, with a peak around the turn of the second and third centuries, but decreasing sharply after the reign of Caracalla.⁴⁴ Although several scholars have tried to explain the peak, as well as the third-century decline and local differences, none of these explanations so far have been fully satisfactory. As has been recently argued, it is more probable that 'a variety of mundane and interconnected forces—economic, demographic, and social, as well as physiological, and perhaps political—gradually shaped the prevailing cultural practice in different localities.'⁴⁵ When viewed from our perspective, the Empire-wide epigraphic behaviors may seem regular and uniform, but this view is likely to be deceptive. Yet, although the third-century decline in the number of inscriptions cannot be univocally explained, it is a trend which any researcher dealing with the third century should bear in mind.

The historiographic evidence has its own merits and complications. For the period under discussion, there are two contemporary ancient authors: Cassius Dio and Herodianus. Dio was a senator from Bithynia who lived from mid-second century until circa AD 229. The 80 books of his *Roman History*, written in Greek, narrate the sequence of historical events from the foundation of Rome until the year AD 229. Large parts of his work have only survived as epitomes by the Byzantine monks Xiphilinus and Zonaras.⁴⁶ When using Dio's work as a source, one should

⁴³ Cf. Eck (2002a), 134. See also Meyer (1990), 83, who refers to epitaphs as status-indicators. Cf. the anthropologist Cannon (1989), 437–438.

⁴⁴ MacMullen (1982), 233–246; id. (1986), 237–238; cf. Mrozek (1973), 113–118; id. (1988), 61–64; Roueché (1989), 19–20; Meyer (1990), 74–96; for an overview, see Bodel (2001), 6–10.

⁴⁵ Bodel (2001), 7. On pp. 6–7, Bodel gives a summary of current explanations with further references.

⁴⁶ Millar (1964), 1–4; cf. Barnes (1984); De Blois (1998–1999).

remember that he was a senator of Greek origin, who combined fondness of the Graeco-Roman culture with the conservative ideals of the Roman senatorial elite. How he treats individual emperors' reigns reflects the values and interests of a senator, and whether an emperor was labeled as good or bad depended on senatorial expectations.⁴⁷ Having completed a successful senatorial career under the Severan emperors, Dio evaluated the rise of those he regarded as uncultured upstarts negatively.⁴⁸

The second contemporary author is Herodianus, a native of Asia Minor who lived from circa AD 175 to 255, and who probably was (the son of) an imperial freedman. His *History of the Empire after Marcus* (*Ab excessu divi Marci*), encompassing eight books written in Greek, covers the events from the death of Marcus Aurelius in AD 180 to Gordianus III's accession in AD 238. He seems to have been a subordinate official in Rome and Asia Minor in the early third century AD.⁴⁹ Herodianus' work has survived completely. Like Dio, Herodianus displays affinity with Graeco-Roman culture and traditions, but not from a senator's perspective. His work shows a tendency to moralize, often resorts to rhetoric, and is not always reliable in reproducing facts.⁵⁰ He seems to have used the work of Dio as a direct source for his own historical work.⁵¹ The works of Dio and Herodianus are valuable sources as they could draw on contemporary knowledge, yet a certain degree of subjectivity, especially toward uneducated social upstarts, should be taken into account. Moreover, since the historians did not have access to comprehensive information on imperial administration, certain matters are not recorded by them.⁵²

Unfortunately, no contemporary work of history covers the entire Empire between 238 and 284. The only rather detailed reports on parts of that period are the *vitae* in the *Historia Augusta*. This work, composed in Latin, consists of a collection of imperial biographies describing the lives of the emperors from Hadrianus (AD 117–138) up to Numerianus

⁴⁷ De Blois (1998), 3405–3415; De Blois (1998–1999).

⁴⁸ Cassius Dio was *praetor* in 194 (Dio 73, 12, 2); *consul suffectus* ca. 204/205; *curator* of Pergamum and Smyrna ca. 217/218; *proconsul Africae* ca. 222; *legatus Augusti pro praetore* of Dalmatia and later of Pannonia Superior under Severus Alexander; and ultimately *consul II ordinarius* in 229. On his career, see PIR² C 492; Leunissen (1989); Thomasson (1996), 87–88, no. 119; De Blois (1998–1999), 268, note 3 with further references.

⁴⁹ Alföldy (1989a).

⁵⁰ On Herodianus and his work, see Alföldy (1989a); De Blois (1998), 3415–3431; Sidebottom (1998); Zimmermann (1999), esp. 285–319.

⁵¹ Kolb (1972), 159–161.

⁵² Cf. Dio 53, 19.

and Carinus (AD 282–284/285). Although the names of six authors are mentioned, it is nowadays generally assumed that the *Historia Augusta* was composed by a single author at the end of the fourth century AD.⁵³ Although some thirty biographies have survived, those of the emperors between 244 and 253 have been lost, the biographies of the Valeriani are only fragmentary, and those of the Gallieni are incomplete. The history of the second and third centuries is generally perceived from the perspective of the non-Christian, senatorial aristocracy of the city of Rome, and the emperors are assessed in terms of their behavior toward that class.⁵⁴ The historical value of the individual *vitae* varies considerably, for valid information is combined with anecdotes, obvious inventions and forgeries. Up until the Severan period, the work seems to follow a reliable source, probably the work of Marius Maximus, who wrote biographies from Traianus to Elagabalus which did not survive, and who is quoted several times.⁵⁵ Herodianus' work was drawn upon for the *vitae* from Clodius Albinus to Maximus and Balbinus, and Dio is not named but was probably also used.⁵⁶ The biographies of the soldier emperors and of the usurpers are unreliable: they contain many invented documentary texts, forged letters, anachronisms and even references to usurpers whose very existence remains in question.⁵⁷ However, even these more unreliable parts of the *Historia Augusta* contain information on emperors and administrators which is confirmed by other sources. Details mentioned only in the *Historia Augusta* should thus always be viewed with scepticism, but should not be rejected beforehand.⁵⁸

The accounts of Cassius Dio, Herodianus and the author of the *Historia Augusta* are complemented by several authors, who were rather brief in their discussion of the period AD 193 to 284. One was the fourth-century author Aurelius Victor, who wrote the *Historiae Abbreviatae*, also known as the *Liber de Caesaribus*, describing the emperors from Augustus to Constantius II. Like Dio and the author of the *Historia Augusta*, a senatorial perspective informs Victor's history, as he focuses

⁵³ Syme (1986), 211; 219; following Dessau (1889), 337–392, who was the first to reject the information on the authors contained in the work itself.

⁵⁴ Johne (1976).

⁵⁵ On Marius Maximus, see Birley (1997b).

⁵⁶ Kolb (1972), 159–161.

⁵⁷ Syme (1971), 54–77, who refers to these lives as secondary *vitae*; and more recently Brandt (2006), 11–24.

⁵⁸ One biography, the *Vita Severi Alexandri*, is more of an ideological 'mirror of princes' than a piece of historiography. See Bertrand-Dagenbach (1990).

on the moral decline of the senatorial class and criticizes the dominant role of the military.⁵⁹ The *Epitome de Caesaribus*, a summary of the *Liber de Caesaribus*, was falsely ascribed to Aurelius Victor as well, but this has been refuted.⁶⁰ Brief accounts on the history of the third century can also be found in the works of the late Roman historians Eutropius, Festus, and the Byzantine authors Zosimus and, as mentioned above, Zonaras.⁶¹

The majority of the administrative documents, like for instance *codicilli*, have not survived, as they were not meant to be public and were written on perishable materials.⁶² From Egypt, of course, we have a considerable number of papyri, some of which contain information on the administration of the Empire and/or the names of administrators.⁶³ Very specific information on administration can also be derived from the legal writings in the *Corpus Iuris Civilis*, a collection of fundamental works in jurisprudence issued by order of the Byzantine emperor Iustinianus I.⁶⁴ This corpus includes, beside the *Novellae* (new laws that were passed after AD 534, most of which were officially issued in Greek), three other major units of Roman law: the *Codex Iustinianus* (a collection of imperial constitutions from Hadrianus to Iustinianus), the *Institutiones* (an introductory legal text book with binding legal force) and the *Digesta* (a compilation of old writings of jurists mainly from the second and third centuries, which constituted an important part of Iustinianus' codification). They were edited by a commission ordered by Iustinianus. As with any type of sources, the *Corpus Iuris Civilis* also needs to be used with caution. It should be noted that the reproduction of old texts in the Justinianic codifications is debated among scholars. Although the existence of interpolations is, of course, undeniable, it remains unclear to what degree textual amendments were made by Justinianic compilers. Nowadays it

⁵⁹ Cf. Aur. Vict., *Liber de Caes.* 37, 7; 40, 13.

⁶⁰ On Aurelius Victor and his work, see Bird (1984).

⁶¹ On these authors and their work, see, for instance, Paschoud (1971–1989); Baldwin (1978); Ridley (1982); Bird (1988); Bleckmann (1992); Kettenhofen (1993). Other (fragmentary) sources can be added to this list, for instance the letters of Cyprianus (Alföldy 1973), fragments of Dexippus (Martin 2006), Eusebius' *Historia Ecclesiastica*, the *Oraculum Sibyllinum* 13 (Potter 1990), and the so-called *Res Gestae Divi Saporis* written in Middle Persian, Parthian and Greek (Kettenhofen 1982; Frye 1984). Most of these additional sources are collected in Hartmann (2008a), with further references.

⁶² Cf. Eck (2002a), 132.

⁶³ On third-century papyri, see De Jong (2006).

⁶⁴ The name *Corpus Iuris Civilis* was not used in antiquity. It occurs for the first time in 1583 as the title of the first one-volume collected edition of the *corpus iuris* provided by Dionysius Gothofredus. On the Justinianic codifications, see Kunkel (1973), 163–176; cf. Zwalve (2004), 85–138.

is assumed that the 'licence of Justinian's legislative committees to make substantive amendments in the laws was very limited. For each individual dogmatic case they needed the emperor's special permission.'⁶⁵ Furthermore, it is argued that the names of the lawyers were inserted into the new compilation with meticulous care as a matter of reverence.⁶⁶ In light of this, it still seems sensible to use the *Corpus Iuris Civilis* as a base of evidence, except when there are clear indications that specific postdated interpolations were made.

The Merits and Limitations of Prosopography

This study is largely based on prosopographical research. Prosopography aims at gaining evidence about patterns of relationships through the investigation of individual persons, their offices, honors, ancestry, marriages and other connections. All the source material described above contains prosopographical data, information which contributes to the identification of persons, their interrelations, and the outline of their careers, albeit not to the same extent.⁶⁷ Prosopography offers both merits and limitations as a research method. Consequently, it has both been defended and criticized by scholars.⁶⁸ The use of prosopographical material for elucidating the imperial decision process and the innermost politics of the Roman Empire, for instance, has been rejected.⁶⁹ However, the positive contribution of prosopography 'to our knowledge of every important aspect of the government and administration, and very many important aspects of the society, of the Roman world is beyond question.'⁷⁰ As long as one keeps in mind that prosopographical information does not tell the complete story, and as long as conclusions derived from prosopography are checked against and supplemented with

⁶⁵ Lokin (1995), 271. Cf. Watson (1994).

⁶⁶ Lokin (1995), 264.

⁶⁷ In general inscriptions contain more detailed prosopographical data than a literary source such as Herodianus.

⁶⁸ Syme, (1968), 145: 'One uses what one has, and there is work to be done'. Contra Toynbee (1965), 327: 'Able and active minds, reduced to a starvation-diet of knowledge, have fallen greedily upon the additional fare that the 'prosopographical' approach to Roman history offers'. Cf. Graham (1974), 136–157; Burton and Hopkins in Hopkins (1983), 156 note 49; and Eck (2002a), 131–152, esp. 133–136. On the merits and potential of prosopography as a tool of research, see also Cameron (2003), *passim*.

⁶⁹ Graham (1974), 155.

⁷⁰ Graham (1974), 138.

contemporary literature and documents, prosopography remains a legitimate research method in most scholars' estimates.⁷¹

A study like this would never have been possible without existing studies in which prosopographical material is readily available. The *Prosopographia Imperii Romani* (PIR) and the first volume of the *Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire* (PLRE), edited by Jones, Martindale and Morris, are invaluable, as is Thomasson's *Laterculi Praesidum* (LP) which lists senatorial and equestrian governors of the provinces of the Roman Empire from Augustus to Diocletian. Also essential are prosopographical studies by Christol and Leunissen.⁷² Other publications focus on specific reigns, regions, positions or careers.⁷³ For the present study I have profited greatly from the findings and the prosopographical data collected by these scholars.

Structure of the Book

The structure of this book follows the structure of the upper strata of Roman society, as the chapters are arranged according to the social ranks of the representatives of imperial power at the central level. The first chapter focuses on the emperors and the development of the imperial office in the third century. Chapter 2 deals with the impact of third-century events on the senatorial elite. Chapter 3 illustrates the changing position of high equestrians in general, and the power and status of the third-century praetorian prefects in particular. Finally, in Chapter 4, case studies on military officers under Septimius Severus and Gallienus will shed light on the changing composition of the military set, and the changing relationship between emperors and their senior officers.

The development of emperorship is a topic which has received abundant attention in recent studies. Chapter 1 of this study provides a summary of current ideas on the transformation of emperorship in the course of the third century. Concurrently, the history and problems of the third century are introduced, as well as themes which will be dealt with in sub-

⁷¹ Graham (1974), 137–139; Eck (2002a), 136.

⁷² Leunissen (1989); Christol (1986); id. (1997).

⁷³ To name a few: Howe (1942); Barbieri (1952); Pflaum (1960–1966); Crook (1975); Devijver (1976–1980); De Blois (1976); Dobson (1978); Dietz (1980); Birley (1988); Thomasson (1996); Körner (2002); Kreucher (2003). Many articles in various periodicals can be added to this list.

sequent chapters. The chapter attempts to measure the extent to which third-century events affected the power and status of the emperor.

When discussing the position of senators in the third century, most scholars emphasize the changes and the negative effects for senators in general. Several factors, however, indicate that there was at least some continuity in senatorial power and status. Chapter 2 tracks members of the senatorial order who were able to ensure continuity for themselves, and the 'strategies' by which they could safeguard or even develop their position. Through a detailed prosopographic analysis, a senatorial nucleus will be defined. Then, several families within this nucleus will provide examples illustrating the position of senatorial elite families throughout the third century. This will generate some conclusions about how imperial appointment policies affected the traditional senatorial elite in the third century and how crises impacted their status and power.

Chapter 3 discusses the position of high equestrians in the third century. To speak of a rise of the *equites* in the third century is problematic, as the *ordo* consisted of a large number of members and had a highly heterogeneous character. A further complicating factor was that the *equester ordo* of the first and second centuries was a completely different group of people than the equestrian order of the late third century. Therefore, Chapter 3 will start by sorting out in detail which equestrians saw their power increase in the third century and in which spheres, and to what extent this influenced their status. The second part of this chapter, a case study on the praetorian prefects, serves to further display and illustrate the developing position of high equestrians. As will become clear in this chapter, the changing composition of the set of high equestrian officers cannot be dissociated from their changing position between 193 and 284.

Chapter 4 deals with the position of senior military officers, a group in which both senators and equestrians played roles. Several factors indicate that men who exercised military power increasingly influenced the course of events in the third century, and secured and even strengthened their own positions. Two cases clarify the development in the status and power of senior military officers: the military set under Septimius Severus at the beginning of the period under discussion, and high-ranking military officers under Gallienus, in the third quarter of the third century. These two cases represent two crucial moments in third-century history, and are chosen because of the combination of the internal similarities and distinctions.

Finally, by analyzing the various senior power-holders involved in Roman imperial administration at the central level by social rank, this book sets out to clarify some notions on the development of power and status relations between the second and fourth centuries.

CHAPTER ONE

CHANGING EMPERORSHIP: SETTING THE SCENE

For any scholar who is examining power and status relations in Roman imperial times, the position of the emperor is a logical starting point. Although it seems obvious that the emperor's office held the greatest power within the Empire, it cannot be accepted unquestioningly that emperors kept exercising the highest power in the same way, given that the Roman world changed so much between AD 193 and 284. However, while the position of individual emperors was hardly ever unchallenged in the third century, especially from 235 to 284, the emperor as such remained the focal point of the Empire. Under Diocletian, emperorship underwent several changes. Most apparently, four men governed, instead of one under the Tetrarchy, and the emperors presented themselves as *domini* rather than *principes*.¹ There had been a major shift away from emperorship as it had functioned in the first and second centuries AD. These changes made by Diocletian of course resulted from a process of transition that had started long before.

The development of emperorship—or elements of it—in the third century has received abundant attention in recent studies.² As noted above, a discussion of the power and status of the third-century emperor, focusing particularly on developments that could potentially have undermined his authority, is indispensable for my study. Yet, as much of this has already been dealt with in detail elsewhere, this chapter will be relatively brief and will serve as an introduction to the history and problems of the period AD 193 to 284. It will also contain a summary of recent theories on the transformation of emperorship, and introduce the other parts of this book.

¹ See Aurelius Victor, *Liber de Caesaribus* 39, 4, on Diocletian being called *dominus*. For recent studies on emperorship under the Tetrarchy, see, for instance, Rémy (1998); Rees (2004); Demandt-Goltz (2004); Boschung-Eck (2006).

² See, for example, Johne (2008), and generic overviews such as Sommer (2004); Hekster (2008), 56–68. Millar (1992) and Ando (2000) do not focus on the third century only, but are extremely useful to anyone who studies emperorship between 193 and 284.

1.1. *Factors Influencing Emperorship between AD 193 and 284**The Changing Background of the Emperor*³

As the Principate developed from a Republic in which the nobility gathered in the senate carried out the essential offices, and the *princeps* combined spheres of power previously held by senatorial magistrates, it was only natural that the emperorship was initially assigned to a senator.⁴ Eventually, however, *equites* could also ascend the imperial throne. During the first and second centuries AD, the principle of a senatorial *princeps* was endured, although toward the end of the second century men who had risen from equestrian ranks can be found among the imperial candidates. Both Pertinax and Pescennius Niger were Italic *homines novi*, who embarked upon an equestrian career, but rose to senatorial rank through *adlectio*. Pertinax even was of very humble origin: he descended from a freedman.⁵ Septimius Severus was the son of an *eques*, yet he had immediately initiated a senatorial *cursus honorum*. The *Augusti* of the first and second centuries AD were all either from the Italic peninsula, or originating from the Latin-speaking aristocracy of the Western provinces.⁶ Like Pertinax and Pescennius Niger, Didius Iulianus was also born in Italy. His

³ This section is largely based on the information gathered by Kienast (1996), 152–263; Johne (2008); and several biographies on individual emperors or specific periods in the third century, such as De Blois (1976); Dietz (1980); Birley (1988); Körner (2002); Kreucher (2003).

⁴ The literature on the transition of Republic to Principate is immense. On the emperor as a senator, see, for example, Wallace-Hadrill (1996); on the senate in the early Empire, see Talbert (1984); id. (1996).

⁵ Pertinax: *adlectus inter tribunicios* (or *aedilicios?*), circa 170/171. Niger: *adlectus inter praetorios*, 180/183?. Avidius Cassius, the son of an equestrian orator who managed to enter the senate under Marcus Aurelius and who seized power in the East in 175, may be added to this category of imperial candidates with equestrian roots. See Kienast (1996), 142–143; 152–153; 159–160. Cf. Vespasianus, who also became emperor with a fairly humble background. According to Suetonius, *Divi Vesp.* 12, 1–2, his father was of equestrian rank.

⁶ The Julio-Claudian emperors stem from ancient patrician *gentes* bound to Rome; the Flavians belonged to the Italic municipal aristocracy; Traianus' family came from Italia, in Hispania Baetica, which was also the hometown of Hadrianus' family. It remains unclear, however, whether Traianus and Hadrianus were born in Italia. On Traianus compare Kienast (1996), 122, and Eck (2002b), 10; on Hadrianus, see Syme (1964), 142–143; Birley (1997), 10; and Canto (2002). Antoninus Pius was from Lanuvium, Italy; Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus were born in Rome; and Commodus in Lanuvium. This development coincided with a more general gradual shift of power from the Empire's geographical center: in the second century, men from the East entered the Senate in Rome. See Halfmann (1979).

father was a member of the aristocracy of Mediolanum (modern Milan), and his mother came from an eminent North African family. Septimius Severus descended from the municipal aristocracy of Lepcis Magna in Africa Proconsularis, and Clodius Albinus, who supported Severus during his first years of reign, was also of noble African birth.

In 217, a new development occurred: Opellius Macrinus, a man of equestrian status, was proclaimed emperor. He was praetorian prefect at the time of his proclamation, and thus belonged to the top of the *ordo equester*. Macrinus was of African origin, but he was ethnically Moorish and his family belonged not to the African aristocracy, but to the lower strata of the provincial population of Mauretania Caesariensis. Macrinus' family lacked connections with senators in Italy, which Severus' family had held. Only Pertinax had been of similarly humble origin, yet he had risen to senatorial rank by the time he was proclaimed. Soon, however, the Syrian princesses, who were related to the Severan house through Severus' wife Iulia Domna, engineered that Macrinus be deposed and replaced by Elagabalus, claiming that the latter was a son of the former emperor Caracalla. After a reign of about four years, Elagabalus was himself replaced by Severus Alexander, the last emperor from the Severan dynasty.⁷

Whereas Macrinus' proclamation constituted merely an interlude within the senatorial Severan dynasty, the accession of Maximus Thrax in 235 made clear that an *eques* acting as emperor had been no aberration. Unlike Macrinus, Maximinus had not been praetorian prefect and therefore was not the highest-ranking *eques* at the time of his acclamation. Maximinus was a professional soldier who had worked his way up to the equestrian position of *praefectus tironibus*, recruiting and training new soldiers in the Rhine area. In 217, when the imperial throne was initially offered to Oclatinus Adventus, the Empire could already have had his first professional military officer as emperor. Yet Adventus, who was very old and lacked the standard elite education, had acknowledged that he was not suited for the position and declined.⁸ About twenty years later, however, the first emperor with a pre-imperial career as professional military man was a fact. This coincided with another novelty: Maximinus, who was either from Thracia or Moesia Inferior, was the first emperor

⁷ On the role the Syrian empresses played in the accession of Elagabalus and Severus Alexander and during their reigns, see Levick (2007), 145–163.

⁸ Dio 79, 14, 2; Herodianus 4, 14, 2. On Oclatinus Adventus' career, see also sections 3.3 and 4.1.

who originated from the border region in the lower-Danube region, the so-called Illyrian area. Maximinus' reign did not last very long: in 238, the senate recognized senator Gordianus I, *proconsul* of the province of Africa Proconsularis, as the new emperor, and he appointed his son Gordianus II as his co-ruler. Maximinus did not give in, and mobilized the Numidian legion to defeat the Gordiani. Nevertheless, a second senatorial revolt the same year, followed by mutiny among Maximinus' soldiers as they besieged Aquileia, caused the death of Maximinus and his son, whom he had elevated to the rank of *Caesar*.⁹

Maximinus was succeeded by Pupienus and Balbinus. The latter was a patrician of ancient nobility, probably from Hispania Baetica. He had been governor of Asia under Septimius Severus and *consul iterum* with Caracalla in 213. Pupienus was a senatorial *vir militaris* of Italic origin, perhaps a *homo novus*, who had worked his way up to the top of the senatorial *cursus honorum* under the Severi.¹⁰ Both maintained good relations with the emperors of the Severan dynasty as imperial *amici*.¹¹ The proclamation of two emperors might be seen as an attempt to restore the old republican principle of two consuls governing jointly. Yet, it is more likely that each of the two was supported by a different section of the senate, each wanting its own representative on the throne: the traditional senatorial aristocracy on the one hand, and a relatively new crop of senators on the other hand who had ascended through the senatorial career path through military posts and other positions in the imperial service.¹² The choice of the senate obviously did not please the praetorian guard. Backed by the urban *plebs* in Rome, the praetorian cohorts first forced Balbinus and Pupienus to elevate Gordianus III, a descendant of the Gordiani, to the rank of *Caesar*, and then dethroned the sitting *Augusti*. The young Gordianus III, who was born in Rome under Severus Alexander, was proclaimed as their successor. From 241, the Empire was ruled *de facto* by praetorian prefect Timesitheus, a situation which positioned other equestrian men the chance to enhance their power.¹³ When

⁹ On the senatorial revolt in 238, see Dietz (1980); Haegemans (2005).

¹⁰ In the context of this study the phrase *vir militaris* is used to refer 'to anyone who had some experience of military life or had chanced to make a reputation in warfare'. Cf. Campbell (1975), 11–12. Whether there was a homogeneous group of specialist *viri militares* with a distinctive career and special promotion, is debated among scholars. On the debate, see Campbell (1975) and Birley (1992), 14–15.

¹¹ See Crook (1975), 155; 159.

¹² Johnes (2008), 589–590.

¹³ On Timesitheus' career, see section 3.1.

Gordianus died in 244, another praetorian prefect attained the imperial throne: Philippus Arabs, descending from local *potentes* from Arabia. For the third time in thirty years, the unwritten rule that the emperorship was reserved for a senator was broken. Philippus presumably had a mixed administrative and military career. His brother Priscus, also of equestrian rank, was virtually his co-regent, ruling the eastern part of the Empire. Yet, remarkably, Priscus was never officially elevated to the rank of *Caesar* or *Augustus*, nor even granted senatorial status. This underscores the changing role of senators within the socio-political hierarchies, an issue which will regularly recur in this study.¹⁴

Philippus Arabs was eventually dethroned by Decius in 249. Ironically, the emperor had created the opportunity for Decius to seize power, by sending this senator from Sirmium to the Danubian border region to restore order. The united troops of Pannonia and Moesia assigned to his command proclaimed Decius emperor in Pannonia. It is assumed that in the 230s Decius, as governor of Moesia Inferior and of Germania Inferior successively, had been involved in Severus Alexander's German expedition of 234–235. Under Maximinus Thrax, Decius was appointed governor of Hispania Citerior, and under Philippus he became city prefect of Rome. Like Decius, the next emperor Trebonianus Gallus was a consular senator at the time of his proclamation. He originated from Italy, and was governor in Moesia when he seized power after Decius' death. Aemilius Aemilianus was also a senatorial governor of Moesia Superioris when he was proclaimed emperor by the troops and marched against Gallus in Italy. Gallus had to call back to Italy Valerianus, who then held a special command in the upper-Danube border region to ward off Germanic tribes. On their way to Italy, however, when Valerianus received word that Gallus had been defeated, his troops proclaimed him emperor. By autumn 253, Aemilianus had been killed by his own men, and Valerianus was recognized as the new emperor. He made his son Gallienus his co-ruler, elevating him to the rank of *Augustus*. Valerianus and Gallienus were the last emperors in the third century who were definitely part of the traditional senatorial aristocracy: Valerianus was related through marriage to the influential senatorial *gens Egnatia* from Italy, and was a *vir consularis* from circa 238 onwards.¹⁵ He had apparently held a leading

¹⁴ By the reign of Philippus Arabs, elevating a co-emperor had become current practice, see section 1.2.

¹⁵ On the Egnatii, see Chapter 2, especially no. 8 in the Excursus.

position in the senate under Decius.¹⁶ With the joint reign of Valerianus and Gallienus in the middle of the third century, the traditional emperorship, shaped and carried out by the senatorial aristocracy, came to an end.

In 268, Gallienus became the victim of a conspiracy of his general staff, which consisted mainly of men of Illyrian origin. The emperor was murdered and succeeded by one of these generals, Marcus Aurelius Claudius, presently known as Claudius II Gothicus. According to the author of the *Historia Augusta*, Claudius was from Dalmatia or Moesia Superior, and most likely he was cavalry commander at the time the plot was carried out. When Claudius died in 270, he was succeeded by his brother Aurelius Quintillus. Their nomenclature indicates that they probably were new citizens, whose family had gained citizenship in 212 due to the *Constitutio Antoniniana*.¹⁷ Quintillus only reigned for a few weeks. In 270, Domitius Aurelianus was proclaimed emperor; he seems to have been cavalry commander (*dux equitum*) under both Gallienus and Claudius, and was probably involved in the plot against Gallienus as well. He too was born in the Illyrian area and of humble origins.¹⁸ It is likely that he worked his way up from being an ordinary soldier to becoming a military officer of equestrian rank. Aurelianus reigned for about five years and was succeeded by Claudius Tacitus, who has for a long time been considered a senatorial rather than a soldier emperor. Whether this attribution is correct is highly disputable. By all odds, Tacitus was a senator who had risen from equestrian ranks, and who had been consul before being proclaimed emperor, which distinguished him from his immediate predecessors. According to Zonaras, he was proclaimed emperor by the army, but the author adds that thereupon Tacitus marched to Rome, and only accepted the imperial insignia when the proclamation was sanctioned by the senate. A senatorial renaissance, as claimed by the *Historia Augusta*, did not occur in the 270s. Yet, Tacitus may have paid more attention to the senators than the average emperor

¹⁶ Zonaras 12, 20; Johnes (2008), 596; Körner (2002), 350–351.

¹⁷ See Buraselis (2007) and Hekster (2008), 45–55, for a summary on the debate on the *Constitutio Antoniniana* and its consequences with further references.

¹⁸ According to the *Historia Augusta* (*HA, Vita Aurel.* 3, 1), Aurelianus either was from that part of Moesia which was renamed Dacia Ripensis during his reign, or from Sirmium (Pannonia Inferior). On his humble origins, see also *HA, Vita Aurel.* 3, 1. The statement found in the *Epitome de Caesaribus* 35, 1, that he was the son of a senator's tenant (*colonus*) may have been an invention.

in the second half of the third century did. If so, this was probably what earned him his image.¹⁹

Tacitus' successor was Annius Florianus, *praefectus praetorio* at the time of his proclamation and allegedly Tacitus' brother. Considering the nomenclature, he can only have been a half-brother on the maternal side. Florianus only ruled for a few months before he was overthrown by Marcus Aurelius Probus. This man resembles Claudius and Aurelianus in that his name leads one to suspect that he was a new citizen, and he is, in fact, said to have been of humble origin and born in Sirmium. A centurion who had worked his way up to a position as tribune is supposed to have been his father. Probus himself was apparently a *miles* who eventually became a military commander (*dux*), probably of equestrian rank, in the East under Tacitus. Not long after Tacitus' death, Probus was proclaimed emperor by troops in the East. Although his reign lasted a relatively long six years or so, he was killed by soldiers in Sirmium, and his praetorian prefect Carus became the new *Augustus*. Carus was from Gallia Narbonensis, but nothing further is known about his ancestors. After a few months, Carus made his sons Carinus and Numerianus his co-regents. When Numerianus died in November 284, Diocletian seized power.

As has become clear from this brief narrative, a profound change in the background of the Roman emperors can be detected in the period between AD 193 and 284. Whereas the emperors of the first and second centuries had all been senators at the time of their proclamation, by the third century *equites* could also ascend the imperial throne. At first this happened incidentally, but from 268 onward most emperors were of equestrian rank when they were proclaimed. This was no sudden change: from the end of the second century, senatorial newcomers, men who had risen from equestrian ranks, can be found among the imperial candidates; they can be considered precursors to the third-century equestrian emperors. This process furthermore entailed a transformation in the career-related background of the imperial candidates. The emperors who dominated until the 230s had mostly undergone either a

¹⁹ Zonaras 12, 28; *HA, Vita Taciti*; Johne (2008), 598–599; cf. 601–603. The distinction between 'soldier emperors' ('Soldatenkaisern') and 'senatorial emperors' ('Senatskaisern') stems from the middle of the 19th century. As by now it has become clear that this matter should be approached with more subtle distinctions, the division is no longer commonly used. For an overview on this matter, see Hekster (2008), 57–61.

traditional and relatively short senatorial career, if they belonged to the patrician senatorial aristocracy, or else worked their way up to the top of the senatorial *cursus honorum* through military posts and other positions in the imperial service. In 235, Maximinus Thrax became the first emperor who rose from being a common soldier to a professional military officer and who, from that position, eventually became emperor. From then on, most emperors reached their position through essentially military posts, and from 268 onward most imperial candidates were men who started their career as professional military men, and had risen to the ranks of equestrian military officers. This obviously coincided with another trend from the middle of the third century: the troops operating in the periphery of the Empire played an increasingly decisive role in the proclamation of new emperors. Moreover, the geographic origin of the emperors shifted markedly from the center to the periphery. The emperors of the first and second centuries, and even those ruling the Empire in the first three decades of the third century, all either had Italic roots or combined provincial roots with close ties to senators based in the Italic peninsula. As the first emperor from the Illyrian area, Maximinus Thrax's rule was the harbinger of a growing trend: the majority of the emperors of the 'Central Empire' from the second half of the third century were Illyrians.

Instability Caused by Internal Struggles and External Threats

Third-century emperorship also adjusted to the unstable situation in the Empire, caused mainly in the border regions by both internal struggles and external threats. This instability brought about short reigns and rapid changes of imperial power. After a period of expansion, the Roman Empire had reached its territorial peak at the beginning of the second century AD. While the emperor Traianus was still conquering new areas, Hadrianus' and his successors' policies aimed at consolidating territory already conquered.²⁰ Instead of being aggressors, the Romans became defenders who prevented other people from crossing their borders and invading their lands. The policy worked well for some decades, but Marcus Aurelius was confronted with not only severe incursions of external enemies on both the northern and eastern frontiers, but also a serious internal threat as Avidius Cassius claimed imperial power in Egypt in

²⁰ On imperial frontier policy, see, for instance, Millar (1981); Mattern (1999); Wilkes (2005).

172/173. The events during his reign foreshadowed the critical situations which would afflict the Empire and its rulers between AD 193 and 284.²¹

Relations with the tribes inhabiting the area north of the frontiers of the Empire, beyond the Rhine and the Danube, had not been continually hostile, yet they had never been stable either. The Romans had combined diplomacy and warfare to deal with these people. Various emperors had allowed groups of tribesmen to settle within the Empire and had recruited some of them into the Roman army. Around the end of the second century, tribes such as the Alamanni and Franks sought food, lands to farm, workers and protection in the Rhine and Danube areas. As their needs increased over the course of the third century, raids across the frontiers grew more frequent and the invasions more severe. The Eastern Empire presented similar problems. Invasions by the Goths, Quadi, Vandals, and Sarmatae pressured the northeastern border regions and the Balkans. From 255 onward, Goths also threatened Asia Minor from overseas.²² Incursions like these occurred during the reign of Caracalla, in the 230s under Severus Alexander, and subsequently under Maximinus Thrax, and recurred regularly from the 240s onward.²³

²¹ On the external and internal problems during the reign of Marcus Aurelius, see Birley (1987), esp. 140–210; 249–255.

²² For a detailed discussion of the situation beyond the northern frontiers in the third century, see, for example, Piso (2005); Goltz (2008a), id. (2008b). On the Germanic tribes, see further Todd (2005); for the Goths, see, for instance, Wolfram (2001); on the Alamanni in the third century, Drinkwater (2007).

²³ Caracalla fought against the Alamanni along the borders of Germania Superior and Raetia in 213 (*HA, Vita Car.* 5). Severus Alexander was up against Germanic tribes from 234 onward (Herodianus 6, 7, 5; *HA, Vita Sev. Alex.* 59). These fights along the *limes* in Germania Superior and Raetia were continued by Maximinus Thrax and lasted until 236. From 236, Maximinus campaigned against Sarmatae and free Dacians. Philippus Arabs fought against Carpi in the Danube provinces between 245 and 247 (Zosimus 1, 20; Piso (2005), 51–59). Decius campaigned against Goths in the Balkans in 250–251. After a stay in the Balkans, Gallienus fought the Franks at Cologne, and then the Iuthungi and Alamanni in Italy in the 250s. At the end of his sole reign, he campaigned against the Goths and Heruli in the Balkans. Claudius Gothicus defeated the Alamanni in Northern-Italy in 268 (*Epitome de Caesaribus* 34, 2), and the Goths in the Balkans in 269 (Zosimus 1, 45, 1). Aurelianus contended against the Vandals, the Iuthungi and the Sarmatae in Pannonia in 271, and against the Goths in the Balkan area (*HA, Vita Aurel.* 22, 2); he decided to give up the province of Dacia because of repeated invasions in 272. In 273, Aurelianus fought against the Carpi in the Balkans, on his way back from the East (*HA, Vita Aurel.* 30, 4). Around 275 substantial parts of Gallia were invaded. After Aurelianus' successor Tacitus campaigned against the Goths in Asia Minor in 276, Probus contended against the Franks and Alamanni in Gallia, against Germanic tribes in the Rhine area in 277–278, against the Burgundians and Vandals in Raetia (Zosimus 1, 68), the Sarmatae in the Illyrian area (*HA, Vita Prob.* 16, 2), and Isaurians in Asia Minor (*HA,*

In the eastern border of the Empire, the Romans had had to deal with the Parthian empire.²⁴ Yet by the reign of Severus Alexander the Parthian empire had been weakened by civil war, so that in 226 the Parthians were finally defeated by the Sassanid dynasty and lost their empire to the Persians. The latter took over the Parthians' role as Rome's most feared enemy in the East. The Sassanids, however, were more aggressive and eager to expand their empire westwards into Roman territory. Above all, they wished to conquer the fortified transportation routes along the Euphrates, from Palmyra to Characene, and strongholds in Middle and Northern Mesopotamia, such as Hatra, Nisibis and Edessa.²⁵ The first war against the Persians took place during the reign of Severus Alexander. Other major battles were fought between 240 and 272 under the Persian ruler Shapur I, and the Persians won most of these.²⁶ In 260, this even led to one of the most humiliating events in Roman history, when the emperor Valerianus was captured by the Persians.²⁷

Vita Prob. 16, 4; Zosimus 1, 69–70). Carus fought against the Sarmatae in the Balkans, and his son Carinus defeated Germanic tribes in 283. See Halfmann (1986), 223–242, and Kienast (1996), 162–263, for further references. Septimius Severus' campaign against the Caledonian and Maeatae tribes in Britannia in 208–211 ended in peace under Caracalla, which lasted for most of the third century. These tribes should thus not be counted among the continuous enemies in the northern border area of the Empire. On the Severan expedition in Britannia, see Birley (2005), 195–203.

²⁴ Between 193 and 226, several emperors fought against the Parthians. Septimius Severus campaigned against the Parthians in 195 and again in late 197–198 (*Dio* 75, 1–3 (pp. 194–201); 76, 9.; *HA, Vita Sept. Sev.* 16, 1–5). Caracalla initiated a war against the Parthians in 216 (*Dio* 79, 1 ff.; *Herodianus* 4, 11, 2 ff.), which after his death was concluded by Macrinus with a peace treaty in 217 (*Dio* 79, 26). See Halfmann (1986), 216–231, and Kienast (1996), 156–171, for further references. On relations between Rome and Parthia, see Campbell (1993).

²⁵ Drexhage (1988).

²⁶ Severus Alexander waged war against the Persians between 231 and 233 (*Herodianus* 6, 4–6; *HA, Vita Sev. Alex.* 50); Gordianus III led an expedition against them in 243–244, whose unsuccessful result caused unrest among the Roman soldiers, whereupon they killed the emperor. Peace was bought by Gordianus' successor Philippus Arabs in 244. In 254/255, Valerianus started a campaign against the Persians, who had taken Antiocheia in 253 (*SEG* 17, 528). The war against the Persians seems to have been continued after Valerianus' death by Ballista and Septimius Odaenathus. Aurelianus was on his way to fight the Persians in the East when he was murdered in 275 (*HA, Vita Aurel.* 35, 5; Zosimus 1, 62, 1; Zonaras 12, 27). Carus, finally, campaigned against the Persians, before he died in 283 (*HA, Vita Car.* 8, 1; Zonaras 12, 30). For further references, see Halfmann (1986), 231–242, and Kienast (1996), 177–259. For a more detailed discussion of the situation beyond the eastern frontiers in the third century, see, for instance, John-Hartmann-Gerhardt (2008), 474–580; on the relations between Rome and the Persians, see also Kettenhofen (1982) and Frye (2005).

²⁷ See Festus, *Breviarium* 23; Thirteenth Sibylline Oracle 155–171 (with commentary

The increasing pressure on the northern and eastern frontiers caused unrest within the Empire. Distrust and disaffection brought about internal strife: the Romans started to fight among themselves as soldiers in various parts of the Empire each proclaimed their own emperors. The army had always been able to make or break emperors, but this had never happened in such quick succession as it did in the third century, especially from 235 onward.²⁸ The situation in 193, when after Pertinax' death three new emperors were proclaimed—Septimius Severus by the troops in Pannonia Superior, Didius Iulianus by the praetorian guard in Rome, and Pescennius Niger by the troops in Syria—foreshadowed what would become the common state of affairs after the death of the last Severan emperor: soldiers proclaimed more than fifty emperors in about fifty years. Some of these emperors survived only a few months before being killed either by rival armies or by the same troops that had initially supported or even proclaimed them. Turmoil and hostility emerged mainly among soldiers in areas which were afflicted by external pressure, and it was the troops in those areas—the Rhine and Danube region, the Balkans, on the Syrian borders—who proclaimed new emperors most frequently. Usurpers arose in those corners of the Empire where the emperor was absent, so that he became merely a somewhat distant concept to subjects and resident army divisions. Thus, as support for a coup lay present there, imperial power was obviously not represented in a decisive and satisfactory way. Dio, for example, reports that two *legati legionis* stationed in Syria were proclaimed emperor in 219, not long after Elagabalus had left the province for Rome.²⁹ The emperor's decision to depart for the capital thus proved dangerous. The areas most frequently afflicted by external pressure and internal strife between emperors and counter-emperors, were obviously most affected by third-century events, either positively, as the presence of troops could stimulate trade, or negatively, as rampaging armies could disrupt social and economic life.³⁰

in Potter 1990) for the Roman point of view, and *Res Gestae Divi Saporis*, 9–11 (with commentary in Frye 1984) for the Persian viewpoint.

²⁸ On the significance of military support for emperors until 235, see Campbell (1984), esp. 365–414.

²⁹ Dio 80, 7, 1, on Gellius Maximus, *legatus legionis IV Scythicae*, proclaimed in Syria Coele, and . . . s Verus, *legatus legionis III Gallicae*, whose full name is unknown and who was proclaimed in Syria Phoenice at about the same time. Both of them were killed shortly after their proclamation.

³⁰ Cf. De Blois (2007c), 8. Most scholars now acknowledge that regions such as Africa, Syria and Pamphylia prospered in the third century; see, for instance, Borg-Witschel (2001), 61; Duncan-Jones (2004); Mitchell (1993), 238.

Yet, the internal problems were not confined to clashes between Roman troops. In 260, during the reign of Gallienus, shortly after Valerianus was captured by the Persians, the Empire was in danger of splitting up. Problems seemed ubiquitous, and the Roman emperor was deprived of control of two large areas and the armies stationed in each. In the West, a desperate situation led to the onset of a Gallic counter-empire, as Marcus Cassianus Latianus Postumus, Gallienus' military commander on the Rhine, rebelled against the emperor. Postumus defeated Germanic tribes who had invaded Italy and this made him a local savior.³¹ As a consequence, Postumus took up the title *Germanicus Maximus*, and was proclaimed emperor by his soldiers, after which he marched upon Cologne, where Gallienus' son Saloninus represented imperial power.³² Saloninus was put to death and, probably at the end of the summer of 260, some three months after Valerianus' demise, Postumus established an autonomous Gallic empire (*Imperium Galliarum*), including the provinces of Gallia, Britannia and Hispania, and initially also Raetia.³³ He patterned his territorial organization after the Roman Empire, but unlike other usurpers Postumus refused to march on Rome. Obviously, the situation would not have been acceptable for Gallienus, but he did not manage to solve the problem: the Gallic empire continued to exist after Postumus' death in 269, and lasted until the summer of 274.

The East experienced a similar situation. Valerianus' capture left the eastern provinces of the Roman Empire unprotected. Septimius Odaenathus, a nobleman from the rich Syrian caravan city of Palmyra, gathered an army and fought off the Persians. Not only did Odaenathus help Gallienus fight Shapur and recover Mesopotamia, but he also killed the usurper Quietus. Odaenathus' position after his victory is heavily disputed; but it seems that, although he was *de facto* ruling the East, his continued allegiance to Rome kept him from becoming a usurper such as

³¹ *AE* 1993, 1231 (11 September 260, Augsburg, Raetia), a dedication to *Victoria* for her aid in destroying the Semnoni and Iuthungi. The inscription was erected by the otherwise unknown Marcus Simplicinius Genialis. On the inscription and its significance, see Potter (2004), 256–257; cf. Jehne (1996).

³² Zosimus 1, 38, 2; Zonaras 12, 24, 10–12. Allegedly, Saloninus and his tutor Silvanus had claimed for themselves the booty of a battle which Postumus had distributed amongst his soldiers. See Bleckmann (1992), 242–248.

³³ On the Gallic empire, see König (1981); Drinkwater (1987). Emperors and officials of the Gallic empire are not included in my analysis of administration and social hierarchies, as the evidence on the political elite of that area and their careers is too limited for the purpose of this study. Cf. Burnand (2005), vol. 2, 567–611, on men from Gallia in the second half of the third century.

Postumus.³⁴ Since there is no evidence for secession in those years, Gallienus could still claim to be emperor of Syria and its wider surroundings in the 260s, so there was no reason for him to attempt to recover the area. The situation changed, however, when Odaenathus was murdered in 267/268, and was succeeded by his wife Zenobia and their son Vaballathus. Palmyra seems to have changed course, and, as Palmyrene influence spread in the East, it became unclear whether the rulers of Palmyra still accepted Roman sovereignty. In 272, the emperor Aurelianus organized a campaign against the ‘Palmyrene empire’ to restore order in the East.³⁵ The solution which had temporarily stabilized the East had developed into a situation in which the center had clearly lost control. After defeating Zenobia and Vaballathus, Aurelianus decided to solve the Western usurpation as well: in 274, the emperor defeated Tetricus, the last ruler of the Gallic empire. Local military superiority had been the power base of both Odaenathus in the East and Postumus in the West. The fact that both of them settled for local authority enabled both the Gallic empire and the autonomy of Palmyra to last for more than ten years, as the Roman imperial center did not consider them an immediate threat. Yet the emergence of these breakaway ‘states’ at the height of the third-century crises seriously challenged the unity of the Empire, which in a way undermined the authority of the Roman emperors at the center in the 260s, who were unable to solve the situation. Besides, this development increased the influence of the Danube forces and their leaders within the ‘Central Empire’.

Under these unstable circumstances, Roman emperors continued to express dynastic expectations. Almost all the emperors who had the chance promoted a successor by exalting their son or sons to the rank of *Caesar* or *Augustus*.³⁶ Dynastic claims were often enforced by appointing

³⁴ On Odaenathus’ career, see section 4.2.

³⁵ On Palmyra’s change of course, see Millar (1993), 170–173; on the ‘Palmyrene empire’, see Hartmann (2001); Hartmann (2008c). Rulers and officials of the ‘Palmyrene empire’ are not included in my analysis, as its administrative structures are poorly understood and probably more comparable to an Oriental kingdom than to the ‘Central Empire’.

³⁶ By exalting sons to the rank of *Caesar* or referring to them as *princeps iuventutis*, emperors expressed dynastic expectations. Yet, they clearly did not consider the time ripe to actually designate them as their successors by making them *Augusti*. The motive for such restraint must have varied from case to case. According to *HA, Vita Pert.* 6, 9, Pertinax prevented his son from being called *Caesar*, but some inscriptions refer to his son as *princeps iuventutis* (*CIL* 3.14149, 35 = *ILS* 5842; *CIL* 3.14149, 38 = *ILS* 5845 (both Arabia)).

their sons as fellow consuls. Frequently, emperors chose a symbolic moment in their reign to make such dynastic statements, so that the appointments coincided with, for instance, the defeat of a rival or the celebration of a victory over external enemies.³⁷ Yet, only one successful dynasty (the Severan) existed between 193 and 284. From the death of Severus Alexander onward, ruling emperors no longer managed to establish a dynasty which would last for any considerable length of time. The Gordiani, although there were three of them, did not found an enduring dynasty, as the first two only ruled a limited territory for about three weeks in 238, and Gordianus III, who was very young when he was made *Augustus*, only reigned for about six years, during which time the imperial power lay *de facto* in the hands of his praetorian prefect and father-in-law Timesitheus. The emperor Valerianus made obvious attempts to establish a dynasty, as he made his son Gallienus his co-ruler. Valerianus Junior, probably the son of Gallienus, was elevated to the rank of *Caesar* during the joint reign of Valerianus and Gallienus. He died, however, in 257/258, even before the senior emperor Valerianus was captured.³⁸ By the time Gallienus became sole ruler, the authority of the dynasty must have suffered terribly by the humiliation of Valerianus' capture by the Persians. Saloninus, Gallienus' younger son, who had been made *Caesar* in 258, and represented the imperial family in Cologne in 260, became the victim of Postumus' claim for power in the Gallic area. If Gallienus still had dynastic hopes at that point, they probably ended with the death of Saloninus.³⁹ Valerianus' dynasty had not survived for more than two

³⁷ Some examples: Caracalla replaced Clodius Albinus as *Caesar* when Albinus was proclaimed *Augustus* by the troops in Britannia. Not long after Albinus was defeated, Caracalla was exalted to the rank of *Augustus* and Geta became *Caesar*. Geta became *Augustus* when the Severi were staying in Britannia, during which he had to exercise jurisdiction and administer affairs of the Empire, while Severus and Caracalla were fighting battles. See Herodianus 3, 14, 9; Birley (1988). Diadumenianus became *Caesar* not long after Macrinus had become *Augustus*, and he was exalted to the rank of *Augustus* when the troops in Emesa had abandoned his father. See Dio 79, 17, 1; 19, 1; 34, 2; 37, 6; Herodianus 5, 4, 12; *HA, Vita Diadum.* 1, 1–5. Iulius Philippus became *Caesar* when Philippus arrived in Rome after his acclamation and was exalted to the rank of *Augustus* when his father had returned to Rome after his triumph over the Carpi and Germans. See Körner (2002); on the dates when these titles were conferred, see Kienast (1996), 162–203, with further references.

³⁸ On Valerianus Junior, see Kienast (1996), 220–221, with further references.

³⁹ Marinianus, *consul ordinarius* in 268, either was a son, a nephew, or a cousin of Gallienus. Yet he was only born in 265 and thus no serious candidate for succession at the end of Gallienus' reign. Nevertheless, Marinianus was killed in 268 on the instigation of the senate, according to Zonaras 12, 26; see Kienast (1996), 222.

generations either. The lack of dynastic stability which arose from 235 onward obviously weakened the position of the Roman emperor further, as an important base for legitimating imperial power, especially toward the military—which had been relevant from the beginning of the Principate onward—was lost.⁴⁰

Changing Priorities

Both the emperors' changing backgrounds and the rapid turnover of power sources and players, caused by internal strife and external pressure, altered the demands of the emperor's office in the third century: in short, emperors' priorities changed. The rulers of the first and second centuries AD spent much time handling legal, diplomatic, and civil-administrative matters.⁴¹ As supreme ruler, the emperor was the ultimate judge and administrator in the Empire, and held the final responsibility for all governmental decisions. It was to him that citizens could appeal as a last resort when injustices could not be remedied locally.⁴² Decisions of the emperor's representatives were liable to appeal, but judgments by the emperor himself were not. The relative accessibility to the emperor from Augustus onward, especially in Rome and Italy, had been one of the advantages of the early Empire.⁴³ The emphasis Fronto places on the emperor's ability to practice *eloquentia* in a letter to Marcus Aurelius is not strange. As Fronto observes many things had to be achieved by words and letters.⁴⁴ Although the emperor obviously had secretaries and

⁴⁰ On the value attached to dynasties by the military, see Timpe (1962), 88; Lendon (1997), 254. Johne (2008), 612–614, argues for an increasing (formal) importance of the empresses in the third century. His assumption is mainly based on the expansion of the titulature of the *Augustae*. See also Horster (2007), who stresses an increasing importance of dynastic themes on coins in the third century.

⁴¹ For an elaborate survey of the duties of the emperor and the resultant writings, see Millar (1992), 203–272.

⁴² In practice, however, emperors even in the first and second centuries often refrained from interfering at the local level. See Herrmann (1990).

⁴³ Millar (1992), 465–477, on residents' accessibility to the Emperors.

⁴⁴ Fronto, *Ad M. Antoninum de eloquentia* 2, 7: *Considera igitur an in hac secunda ratione officiorum contineatur eloquentia stadium. Nam Caesarum est in senatu quae e re sunt suadere, populum de plerisque negotiis in concione appellare, ius iniustum corrigere, per orbem terrae litteras missitare, reges exterarum gentium compellare, sociorum culpas edictis coercere, bene facta laudare, seditiosos compescere, feroces territare. Omnia ista profecta verbis sunt ac litteris agenda.* ('Therefore consider whether in this second category of duties the study of eloquence should be included. For the duties of emperors are: to urge necessary steps in the senate; to address the people on very many matters in public meetings; to correct the injustices of the law; to send letters to all parts of the globe; to

advisers to assist him in these tasks, his good standing and reputation improved if he was able to write his own speeches and pronouncements. As Millar has shown, the emperor's role in these matters was mostly passive: his pronouncements normally reacted to initiatives from other parties. Cases where the emperor actively sought information from any other source seem rare.⁴⁵

When the Empire was at war, the emperor had yet another important duty: to command the army divisions involved.⁴⁶ Due to the increasing military threats in the period under discussion, the emperor's military function must have become ever more important and time-consuming. In combination with the changing backgrounds of the emperors, most of whom were military men after 268, emperorship acquired an increasingly military character. Consequently, emperors met more military leaders and officers than civil administrators and senatorial magistrates. However, the rise of these emperors with a military background made the ruler less accessible for inhabitants of the Empire who did not belong to the military: they were not the most obvious points of reference for non-military men, and it was sometimes even difficult for them to trace who was emperor at any given time. Non-military tasks continued to be part of imperial duties in the third century, but it is only logical that the third-century emperors, especially after 249, prioritized their military responsibilities, and had less time for responding to individuals' or cities' requests. Although it is true that economic problems in various areas of the Empire, and the lack of clarity on the authority at the local level, may have caused an increase in the number of petitions sent to the emperor, there is no evidence that the emperor personally dealt with all of these.⁴⁷

According to Cassius Dio, Septimius Severus spent a considerable part of his mornings holding court:

The following is the manner of life that Severus followed in time of peace. He was sure to be doing something before dawn, and afterwards he would take a walk, telling and hearing of the interests of the Empire. Then he

bring compulsion to bear on kings of foreign nations; to repress by their edicts the faults of the provincials, give praise to good actions, quell the seditious and terrify the fierce ones. All these are assuredly things to be achieved by words and letters.' (transl. Millar (1992), 203).

⁴⁵ Millar (1992), 266–267.

⁴⁶ Cf. Hekster (2007), 91: 'The Emperor was the military leader *par excellence*'.

⁴⁷ On petitions sent to the emperors in the third century, see Hauken (1998); cf. Hekster (2008), 62–63, with further references.

would hold court, unless there were some great festival. Moreover, he used to do this most excellently; for he allowed the litigants plenty of time and he gave us, his advisers, full liberty to speak. He used to hear cases until noon.⁴⁸

Septimius Severus obviously was accessible to his subjects. The author, however, explicitly states that this routine applied only to peacetime. An inscription of an imperial petition sent to Gordianus III in 238 by petitioner Aurelius Pyrrhus, a praetorian soldier, on behalf of the villagers of Skaptopara attests that in those days people still approached the emperor to solve a problem—abuse by soldiers and officials—, yet the emperor's response makes clear that he did not see the need to deal with the problem himself: he sent the villagers straight back to the governor and chose not to get involved in the matter.⁴⁹ Circa 245, Philippus Arabs was approached by another soldier named Didymus. He presented the emperor with a similar petition: the villagers of Aragua in Asia Minor asked for help, after abuse by soldiers and military officers. That soldiers, and not orators as was (more) common in most of the first and second centuries, delivered the messages, indicates both the changing role of the military and the changing means of communicating between the Empire's inhabitants and the emperor. Philippus Arabs, a former *equus* who most likely had gained experience in the military before he became emperor, and who was fighting the Carpi when the petition reached him, was approached most easily by a soldier, who knew his way into military camps, and could deliver the message to the emperor promptly: there was no need—and perhaps no time—for a formal declamation.⁵⁰ How the emperor responded to the petition from Aragua is unknown.

⁴⁸ Dio 77, 17, 1–2. Cf. Herodianus 3, 10, 2; and Dio 52, 33, 5, where Maecenas advises the emperor Augustus to select equestrian men to assist him in his judicial work, his correspondence, and in handling the decrees of the states and the petitions of private individuals. This may refer to the range of emperors' duties in Dio's time, the late second and early third centuries.

⁴⁹ *CIL* 3.12336 = *AE* 1995, 1373 (Skaptopara, Thracia). Soldiers, visitors, and even the procurators and governors with their staff confiscated goods and demanded accommodation of the villagers of Skaptopara without payment. Skaptopara with its spa-like water was an attractive place to visit. See Halloff (1994); Hauken (1998), 82; 98; 117; De Blois (2007a), 506.

⁵⁰ *CIL* 3.14191 (Asia). See Hauken (1998), 150–153; Mitchell (1999), 43–44; on the message being delivered by a soldier, see also Hekster (2008), 40–41. Cf. Alston (1995), 86–96, and Whitehorne (2004) on the role of centurions conveying petitions to higher officials at provincial and imperial level.

For non-military men from the center of the Empire, communication with the emperor was not only hampered by the changing backgrounds and origins of the emperors, but also by the fact that emperors resided in Rome less often, as military crises in the East and the West called for imperial presence elsewhere. Nevertheless, most third-century emperors did spend some time in Rome during their reign, either shortly after their proclamation or for celebrations such as triumphs, imperial marriages, or festivals.⁵¹ Even in the second half of the third century most of the emperors stayed in Rome between waging their wars, during the winter months. They were at least present in the capital when they took office as *consul ordinarius*, often in January of the year after their proclamation.⁵² Although Rome retained at least a symbolic importance for third-century emperors, long-term stays in the capital were no longer an option for most of the emperors ruling after 250, as they spent most time in border regions, or in cities situated along the traditional routes from the West to the East. Aquileia (in northern Italy), hosted several emperors as the starting-point of several important roads which led to the northeast of the Empire. Septimius Severus may have stayed there for a while when he was on his way from Pannonia to Rome to claim the throne in the spring of 193. Maximinus Thrax faced resistance when he wanted to cross Aquileia in 238, and Quintillus resided in the city when he was defeated by his rival Aurelianus. The latter also crossed the city when he returned from Rome to fight the Goths in Pannonia in 272. Aquileia's significance becomes clear from the fact that an imperial palace was constructed there in the fourth century, in which emperors resided frequently.⁵³

⁵¹ Some examples: Septimius Severus and Caracalla stayed in Rome in 202 when Caracalla married Plautilla. In 204, Severus celebrated the *Ludi Saeculares* in the capital; Severus Alexander went to Rome to celebrate his triumph over the Persians in 233; Philip-pus Arabs came to the capital after he had made peace with the Persians by buying them off in 244, and after defeating the Carpi and Germanic tribes in 247. In 248 he was present in Rome when he celebrated the city's thousandth birthday; Gallienus organized games in Rome in 262, probably in honor of his *Decennalia*. See Halfmann (1986), 216–242.

⁵² Trebonianus Gallus, Valerianus, Claudius Gothicus, Aurelianus and Carus went to Rome some time after their accession to the throne, and opened the next year as *consul ordinarius*. Gallienus returned to Rome at the end of 260, at the beginning of his sole reign, and was *consul ordinarius* in 261 as well. Aurelianus spent two winters in Rome (270/271 and 271/272), and even returned there to celebrate his triumph over Palmyra in 273, according to Zosimus 1, 61, 1. After defeating several usurpers, Probus celebrated a triumph in Rome, possibly at the end of 281. He probably was still there when he started his term as *consul ordinarius* in 282 as well. See Halfmann (1986), 241.

⁵³ Halfmann (1986), 216; 233; 239; on Septimius Severus' stay in Aquileia, see also Birley (1988), 99; on Aurelianus' stay, see Zosimus 1, 48, 1.

Perinthus and Byzantium in Thracia on the other hand, were frequently visited by third-century emperors who were on their way to the Eastern half of the Empire. Septimius Severus probably spent the winter of 193/194 in Perinthus, when he was on his way to Syria to fight the Parthians. Coins suggest that he stayed there again on the return trip to Rome. Coins also attest the presence of Caracalla in Perinthus in 214. He must have passed it en route from the Balkans and Danubian provinces to Asia.⁵⁴ According to Dušanić, Philippus Arabs crossed Perinthus on his way from the Danubian provinces to the East, where he intended to wage war against the usurper Iotapianus, when he learned about the rebellion of Decius in Pannonia and was killed.⁵⁵ Byzantium, meanwhile, sided with Niger and was besieged in 196. Septimius Severus rebuilt the city, which quickly regained its prosperity. Aurelianus crossed Byzantium on his way to Syria, where his first battle against Palmyra took place, and might have spent the winter months there on his way back. He was killed between Perinthus and Byzantium in August/September 275.⁵⁶

Other frequently visited cities included Antiocheia (Syria) and Alexandria (Egypt), which with Byzantium/Constantinople grew out to be the most important cities in the eastern part of the Empire in the fourth century. While Alexandria received visits from the Severan emperors mainly out of curiosity, Antiocheia often provided the base for the third-century emperors' operations when they were fighting the Parthians, Persians or Palmyrenes.⁵⁷ Tyana (Cappadocia), Nicaea (Bithynia) and Nicomedia (Bithynia) were also visited regularly by third-century emperors. The locations of Augusta Treverorum (modern Trier) and Colonia Agrippinensis (modern Cologne) exposed the cities to barbarian attacks, while the political intrigues of resident administrators and generals exposed

⁵⁴ See Halfmann (1986), 216–217; 224, with further references.

⁵⁵ Dušanić (1976); Halfmann (1986), 235. In addition, Numerianus may have been killed in Perinthus by his *praefectus praetorio* Aper on his way from Asia to Europe. See Halfmann (1986), 242.

⁵⁶ *HA, Vita Aurel.*, 35, 5; Zosimus 1, 62, 1; Zonaras 12,27; Halfmann (1986), 239. As is well known, Byzantium was renamed Constantinople in the fourth century and became the capital of the Eastern part of the Empire.

⁵⁷ Alexandria was visited both by Septimius Severus when he travelled through Egypt in 199/200 and by Caracalla in 215. Severus Alexander had planned to go there, but called it off. Antiocheia hosted Caracalla during his journey in Asia Minor in 215. Macrinus used it as his base of operations against the Parthians, and Severus Alexander and Gordianus III attacked the Persians from Antiocheia. During the reign of Valerianus, Antiocheia was invaded by the Persians and Aurelianus' battles against Palmyra took place in the city. See Halfmann (1986), 218–240.

them to civil war. Postumus chose them as capitals in the Gallic empire. The cities retained their importance from 284 onward as important centers, accommodating emperors and usurpers, imperial administrators, and bishops. Sirmium in Pannonia Inferior deserves attention as well. When it was conquered by the Romans in the first century BC, it already was a settlement with a long tradition. The city, situated on a strategic military location, became the capital of the province. Traianus and Marcus Aurelius had prepared war expeditions there, and in the third century the city was still relevant as a strategic base for the emperors, but it was also the birthplace of several emperors and the city in which several emperors were proclaimed by their soldiers.⁵⁸ Sirmium also remained important after the third century.⁵⁹

Meanwhile, the dominant role of the city of Rome was gradually disappearing, and a general shift in location of power from the center (Rome) to the periphery (the cities in border regions and along lines of march) can be detected. This affected the relation between the emperor and institutions bound to Rome, such as the senate and the praetorian cohorts.

1.2. *Consequences for the Position of the Emperor*

Imperial Tasks Increasingly Performed by Others

All these events and developments modified not only the relation of the emperor with the political elite, but also the demands of the emperor's office. An increasing tendency to transfer imperial tasks to representatives emerges in the course of the third century. Obviously, Roman

⁵⁸ Several emperors established their winter headquarters in Sirmium, like (probably) Caracalla in 213/214, Maximinus Thrax in 237/238 and perhaps Probus in 276/277 (*Cod. Iust.* 8, 55, 2) and possibly in 278/9. Probus was killed near Sirmium when he was en route to the East to fight the Persians. His successor Carus was proclaimed emperor there, just as Aurelianus had been, after his predecessor Claudius had died in there. Gallienus probably set up his headquarters in Sirmium in 254/6 or 260, since he received an embassy there (according to an inscription found in Larissa in Thessaly, see Robert-Robert (1951), 167 no. 124; see Halfmann (1986), 223–242).

⁵⁹ There are archaeological remains of an imperial palace, it possessed an imperial arms factory, was a fleet station (*Notitia Dignitatum* (occ.) 9, 18; 32, 50) and the site of an imperial mint. Besides, large numbers of laws were issued there from Diocletian's reign onward. See *OCD* and *DNP* s.v. Sirmium. See John (2008), 629–631, on the new imperial residences in the late Empire, and Haensch (1997) for a detailed discussion of provincial capitals.

emperors had always delegated many duties to others, who mediated imperial power by carrying out civil-administrative, legal, financial, or military responsibilities in specific geographical areas. The administration of the Empire at the central level was not yet formalized and there was no constitution, nor a comprehensive or binding description of the emperors' duties. The imperial administration could therefore be tailored to the needs of any ruling emperor.⁶⁰ Yet the system of administration that Augustus had created was never changed drastically before 284: adjustments consisted mainly of (gradual) changes in the range of officials' duties or the creation of new offices if circumstances so demanded. In a recent study on Roman imperial administration, Eich has argued in favor of the development over the course of the third century of what he calls a 'personal bureaucracy'. By this he means a system tied to and dependent on the individual person of the emperors and not on traditional aristocracies, which could extract enough money, goods and services from the provinces of the Empire to pay for the military forces.⁶¹ Based on the premise that in the third century, especially in the second half, the Roman government needed more money, along with other resources and a more extensive defensive structure to withstand outside attacks, Eich argues that the emperors had to raise more funds and so had to tighten fiscal management in the provinces, which led to a more developed personal bureaucracy.⁶² It is true that Eich's assumption that the circumstances demanded a more coordinated bureaucracy with more and more equestrian civil servants, many of whom were juridically trained bureaucrats, cannot be supported with sound evidence. Nonetheless, this tendency toward a more bureaucratic administrative system would parallel emperors' increasing focus on military matters, which left civil-administrative, financial, and legal matters to others.⁶³

Other innovations from the third century indicate that the emperor was increasingly delegating tasks to others. The appointments of private

⁶⁰ Cf. Peachin (1996), 88: '... any emperor, at any moment, had in principle the power to change the law as he saw fit. Conservatism in this respect may have been the norm; but nothing bound Caesar absolutely.'

⁶¹ Eich (2005).

⁶² A more developed bureaucracy, as administrators' power could extend into more spheres and as the center deployed additional administrators. Cf. Potter (2004), 261–262.

⁶³ De Blois (2007b), 516–517, accepts Eich's main hypotheses, but criticizes Eich's decision to disconnect this process of bureaucratization from a kind of militarization, and argues that Eich overemphasizes emperors' reorganizations of the apparatus between 260 and 284.

individuals to hear cases and dispense justice in place of the emperors has been examined by Peachin. He credits the establishment of an imperial office of substitute imperial judge (*iudex vice Caesaris*, *iudex vice sacra*) to Septimius Severus, during whose reign such judges are first attested, and he further demonstrates that such appointments are attested occasionally throughout the third century.⁶⁴ In his extensive discussion of the emperor's judicial role, Peachin convincingly argues that by the end of the second century AD emperors were overloaded with legal business: for administering justice had become so complicated that many judges and litigants seized the opportunity to appeal to the emperor, if a judge's unfairness (*iniquitas*) and/or inexperience (*imperitia*) had become apparent.⁶⁵ Special senatorial deputies constituted a functional response to the looming structural problem of legal insecurity which encouraged both litigants and judges to approach the emperor for incontrovertible resolutions. Peachin thus argues that the Severan emperors did not invent the *iudices vice Caesaris* merely as a means to ward off work, but to execute governmental services more efficiently. Until the 240s, Rome hosted these *iudices vice Caesaris* the most frequently, but Philippus Arabs seems to have taken the significant step in allocating such judges to the provinces. According to Peachin, the duties of these *iudices* in provincial settings were not merely judicial.⁶⁶ Furthermore, Peachin detected an increase in the practice of appointing substitute provincial governors during the Severan period, as will be discussed in Chapter 3. Moreover, the first appearance of deputies acting in place of praetorian prefects and city prefects in Rome can also be dated in the Severan era. The practice of appointing such proxy judges culminated in the creation of a permanent body of officials authorized to act judicially *vice Caesaris* under the emperor Constantine.⁶⁷ Similarly, expansion of the praetorian prefect's spheres of authority in the course of the third century meant that this official increasingly acted *vice Caesaris*: in both in

⁶⁴ Peachin (1996). Burton (1998) points out that Peachin's argument for Severan creation of senatorial officials acting *vice Caesaris* remains an *argumentum ex silentio*.

⁶⁵ *Digesta* 49, 1, 1 (Ulpianus). Cf. *Digesta* 1, 4, 1, in which Ulpianus proclaims that whatever the emperor wanted had the force of law. On the judicial role of the emperor, see Peachin (1996), 10–91.

⁶⁶ Peachin (1996), 167–187, in which he discusses some provincial *iudices* appointed from Philippus' reign onwards, who may have had civil-administrative or financial duties besides their legal tasks, although he admits (171–172) that this idea remains speculative.

⁶⁷ On the analogous appearance and increase of substitute governors, praetorian prefects and urban prefects, see Peachin (1996), 154–187, and appendix 4, 229–238; on Constantine's reform, see Peachin (1996), 188–199.

the military and non-military domains, the praetorian prefects gradually assumed ever more tasks that were formerly assigned to emperors, as will also be argued in Chapter 3.

In a certain sense, the temporary cessions of territory—as with the Gallic and Palmyrene empires—might be seen as comparable, since they entailed a similar sharing of imperial responsibilities. Surely, the circumstances were different: although the central government did not cede territory as a matter of active policy, the assumption by others of certain tasks and the responsibility over some areas relieved the emperors and enabled them to focus on nearer and more urgent matters. Again, it should be stressed that the Roman emperors did not give those areas up of their own free will, and the secession particularly of Gallia and Palmyra announced the collapse of individual emperorship, at least temporarily. That the Empire, with all its problems, had grown to such proportions that it was no longer possible for one man to rule it, was recognized as early as the second half of the second century AD, when Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus became co-rulers in the 160s, the former focusing on the West, the latter on the East. Similar attempts at dividing the Empire into an Eastern and a Western part were made in the third century, as Valerianus tried to overcome the accumulation of problems by making Gallienus co-ruler. While Valerianus was dealing with situations of crises in the East, Gallienus took care of the problems in the Western border areas. About ten years before their reign, Philippus Arabs recognized the problem as well, and tried to solve it by giving his brother Priscus supreme authority in the East as *corrector Orientis*. Yet, as stressed before, Philippus' solution was of different nature, as Priscus was not elevated to the rank of *Augustus* or even *Caesar*, and thus did not formally share imperial power. In 282, Carus also considered it necessary to secure imperial presence in both the East and the West. He left his son Carinus behind in the Western part of the Empire, and brought along his son Numerianus to the East to fight against the Persians. The official division of the Empire into Eastern and Western parts under Diocletian was thus not a completely unexpected nor unprecedented step.

Changing Relations between Emperors and the Military

The events and developments defined above influenced relations between emperors and their subjects. Most significant for the purpose of this study is the transformation of the interrelations between emperors and the various groups involved in central imperial administration. Obviously,

the increasing military threats affected relations between emperors and the military: it made the emperor more dependent on his troops than ever before. When emperors resided in Rome, in times of relative peace, they were most accessible to those army divisions that were stationed there. That is why in the second and early third century AD, the *cohortes urbanae*, and especially the *cohortes praetoriae*, were so often involved in political affairs.⁶⁸ These cohorts held both access to the imperial family and the power to elect emperors. But because emperors visited Rome less frequently in the third century, they were not only surrounded by those divisions of the praetorian guard and of *legio II Parthica*, which accompanied them, but also by troops in the border regions and the mobile detachments that were increasingly mobilized in the third century. Consequently, high-ranking military officers commanding those troops in the periphery played an ever increasing role in the imperial entourage, while correspondingly the influence of the praetorian cohorts decreased, especially from the 240s onwards.⁶⁹ Again, a shift of power from center to periphery can be detected. This development coincided with a changing composition of the corps of high-ranking military officers: senators' role as military commanders declined, whereas professional military men who had worked their way up to equestrian ranks were rising, as will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

When from the 260s onward high-ranking military officers of the border troops and mobile detachments kept being proclaimed emperor, the distinction between emperors and their corps of generals became less sharp. The case studies in Chapter 4 will further demonstrate how this affected relations between the emperors and their high-ranking officers.

Changing Relations between Emperors and the Senate

Evidently, relations between emperors and senators were influenced by third-century developments as well. The rise of the new military aristocracy in the periphery, in which equestrians rather than senators played a dominant role, combined with the emperors' increasing dependency on the military, and the fact that emperors were eventually more closely allied to the military aristocracy than to the traditional senatorial aristocracy, changed the emperors' relations with senators at several levels.

⁶⁸ See Busch (2007) on the troops stationed directly in and around Rome.

⁶⁹ The latter's dominant role in political matters, and even in imperial proclamations, was assumed by the troops in the periphery.

When in the course of the third century it became clear that the senate was no longer the obvious institution for supplying new emperors, this situation initially sparked resistance in 238. By then, the top of the senate consisted of at least two sections: the traditional senatorial aristocracy—mostly patrician *gentes*—and a group of *homines novi* who were not born senators, but who had worked their way up to top senatorial positions. By the end of the reign of Gallienus, the majority of newly chosen emperors were not only no longer of senatorial status, but they had also risen through military commands—from which senators were by then excluded—, they had reached the imperial throne through support of their troops and were dependent on them to maintain their position.⁷⁰ These emperors were more concerned about preserving the support and loyalty of their armies in the provinces and border regions than they were to secure additional senatorial support. So they became less inclined to set off for Rome to make sure their reign was acknowledged by the senate in the capital.

Not only did the absence of the emperors from Rome hinder the communication with the senate: the changed background of the emperors in the second half of the third century also made it increasingly difficult for emperors to communicate with senators on the same level, as emperors were no longer rhetorically skilled noblemen, but militarily trained professionals. Many senators, especially those belonging to the traditional senatorial elite, may have held these emperors, who in their eyes lacked the appropriate *paideia*, in contempt. Two additional factors diminished the senate's significance to the emperorship's stability: first, emperors no longer needed senatorial acknowledgement to legitimate their imperial power—so that under Carus at the latest the emperor could act without senatorial recognition—, and second, regional usurpers rose who did not aim for legitimacy within the entire Empire but only parts of it.⁷¹

The role of senators in central administration gradually changed as well, as from the reign of Septimius Severus onwards emperors tended to replace senators with equestrian men in several provinces, especially those which demanded extensive military responsibilities, as will be discussed in Chapter 3. This change has often been described in detail,

⁷⁰ On the exclusion of senators from military commands under Gallienus, see Aurelius Victor, *Liber de Caesaribus* 33, 33–34; 37, 5–6. Some inscriptions, however, problematize the statements in Victor. On this matter, see, for instance, Pflaum (1976); Cosme (2007). On the 'edict' of Gallienus and the scholarly debate on this matter, see also Chapter 3, section 3.1.

⁷¹ Johnes (2008), 624–626.

but scholars often overlook or at least underrate how the traditional senatorial aristocracy was able to maintain and perhaps even extend its prestigious position within areas which were not struck by long-term crises such as Italy, Africa and Asia, as will be demonstrated in Chapter 2.

1.3. *Conclusion*

As this chapter has sought to indicate, the development of emperorship in the third century is a complicated process in which it is problematic to distinguish causality from correlation. Clearly, the events and developments of the third century served to undermine the stability of the emperor's position. Of course, there had always been civil wars, military disasters, rebellions within the provinces, invasions from beyond the frontiers, famines and plagues, ever since the early history of Rome. As has long been recognized, however, in the third century the Romans faced many of these problems simultaneously, some of them even on a larger scale than before, and they proved more difficult to deal with than in previous centuries.

Viewed from the perspective of Dahl's aspects of power, which have been discussed in the Introduction, it is clear that there was a general decrease in both the scope and domain of the power which Roman emperors could exercise. That subjects who turned to the emperor for help were referred back to regional authorities was not typical for the third century. However, combined with delegation to and assumption by others of other tasks which had formerly been reserved for emperors, reassignment to local judicial authorities may indicate a decreasing centrality of the emperor as the figure to whom Romans could turn in their times of need. Even if some of these measures aimed originally to facilitate more efficient government and administration, intention does not change consequences: the scope of power exercised by emperors grew narrower. A low point was reached with the secession of the Gallic empire and Palmyra, when emperors were forced to give up parts of the Empire, thus reducing the domain in which they exercised power. Moreover, the amount of power exercised by the emperors increasingly shrank, as the functional visibility and utility of the emperor, and thus of imperial authority as a whole, decreased. As had been the case from the early Empire onward, military preponderance expressed through control over substantial army divisions and military successes remained emperors' most essential power base. With the failure of dynastic stability after

the death of Severus Alexander, an important additional base for legitimating their power—which had been relevant from Augustus onwards—was lost for the emperors.

Furthermore, the status profile of emperors changed in the period under discussion: through the end of the second century AD, emperors had had to be educated senators—either born senators belonging to the traditional aristocracy, or senatorial newcomers—with a network of friends and clients in Rome and preferably some military experience. But at the end of the third century AD, most emperors were military men, born in the periphery of the Empire, who had worked their way up to equestrian ranks and were less familiar with senatorial modes of communicating. Status criteria such as birth, education, experience, and lifestyle had therefore changed immensely, and the significance of imperial candidates' ascribed status seems to have been displaced by their achieved status. The emperor's increasing absence from Rome further complicated communication with the senate. These developments led to emperor Maximinus Thrax's clash with members of the senate in 238. That senatorial consent was no priority for newly acclaimed emperors in the late third century epitomizes the changing relation between emperors and the senate.

In the third century, emperors surrounded themselves ever more with troops from the periphery, and eventually, from the 260s onward, high-ranking military officers were continually proclaimed emperors. This development minimized the distinction between emperors and generals, which further complicated emperors' capacity to legitimate power—at least in senatorial eyes. In addition, communication with emperors was made ever more difficult for senators, not only because they were most accessible to military men, but also because it may not always have been easy to trace rulers who were continuously on the warpath. Meanwhile, the seriousness of many of the problems the Roman Empire faced increasingly demanded immediate interference. Consequently, other men with power were sought out by Romans in need and were mobilized to solve problems which would previously have been brought before the emperor. Given the military character of the majority of the problems in the third century, most of the people addressed at the local level were military leaders, who apparently became ever more aware of their growing power and ever more fearsome rivals for the emperors.

In the end, the shift of priority from center to periphery, which can be detected at several levels, seriously disturbed power balances and obviously affected the position of the emperor in the course of the third

century. The considerable and growing number of usurpers and the secession of certain areas in the second half of the third century showed clearly that imperial authority was ever more challenged. Moreover, emperors' accessibility diminished rapidly, particularly after about 235. Due to these developments and consequences, the changes Diocletian made from 284 onward were not only understandable, but quite natural and perhaps even unavoidable.

CHAPTER TWO

THE IMPACT OF CRISES ON THE POSITION OF THE SENATORIAL ELITE

The crises of the third century altered the position of the senatorial order. This development has been discussed by many scholars, some of whom have even argued that senators had to deal with a crisis within the social system and entirely lost their position as leading elite to the *ordo equester*.¹ More recently, scholars have taken a less extreme position, but they have still been inclined to focus on the changes in the situation of the *ordo senatorius* in the third century, and to ignore, or at least deemphasize, the continuities.² However, the fact that certain offices held by senators at the end of the second century AD, remained in their hands after the reforms of Diocletian, shows some continuity. Even though if anything it was the equestrian order that amassed positions of power at the expense of the senatorial order over the course of the third century (see Chapter 3 below), it was also the equestrian order that eventually disappeared in the late Roman Empire.³ Thus, before further inquiry into changes in the administration and social hierarchies, it seems constructive to observe and map out the continuity which (at least part of) the senatorial order ensured during the chaos and transformations of the third century.

The starting point in seeking continuity is to determine a number of high positions which remained reserved principally for senators both at

¹ E.g. Alföldy (1988), 193: 'The history of the imperial Roman elite during the crisis of the third century seemed to be leading to a conclusion whereby the senatorial order totally lost its leading position to the equestrian order.' Cf. id. (1988), 121–122; Stein (1963), 445; Rémondon (1970), 100–101; on the changing role of the senate after AD 180, see also Talbert (1984), 490–491.

² For more recent views on the *ordo senatorius* in the third century, see, for instance, Potter (2004) *passim*; Lo Cascio (2005), 136. In generic overviews, however, the traditional view still prevails. See, for instance, Sommer (2004), 24: 'Der Senatorenstand hatte endgültig als wichtigste der drei tragenden Säulen des Prinzipats ausgespielt und wurde immer mehr an den Rand gedrängt.'

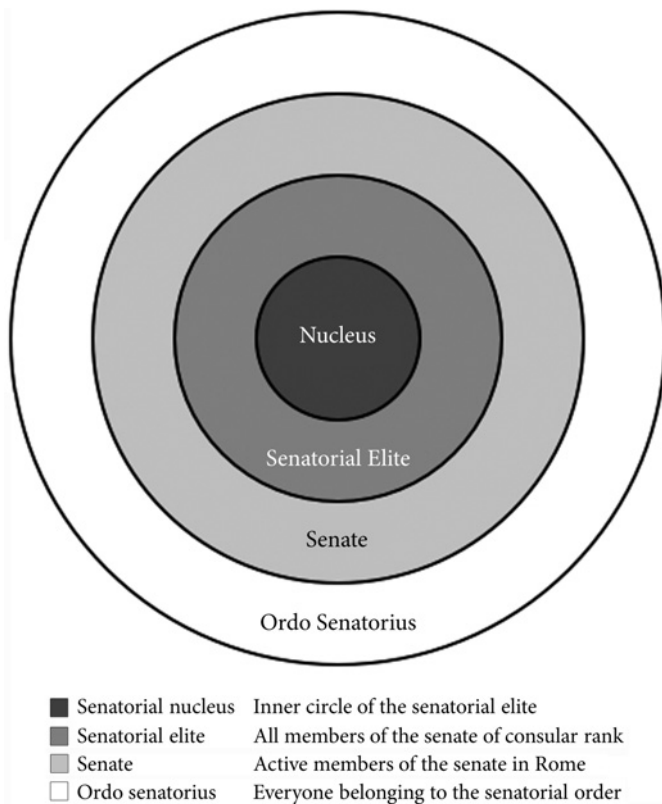
³ On this, see Alföldy (1988), 193–194. The equestrian order was not formally abolished, but highly placed *equites* were enrolled into the senatorial order and the lower equestrian positions went to public officials and officers of lower rank.

the end of the second century and after Diocletian's reforms, which will generate a list of the men who are known to have held these offices in the period under discussion. A subsequent prosopographical examination of these office holders will allow us to distinguish a nucleus within the senatorial elite; this nucleus proved able to maintain or even develop its position within the third century.

2.1. *Establishing the Senatorial Elite in the Third Century*

As has been noted in the Introduction, the senatorial order (*ordo senatorius*) was a heterogeneous group which consisted of several strata (see Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1. Schematic overview of strata within the senatorial order



A sharp distinction held between mere members of the order and full active members of the senate, who held senatorial office(s) in Rome and elsewhere in the emperor's service. Entry into the senate during the Principate was normally restricted to twenty men who were annually elected as quaestors. In addition, men could be taken into the senate from the equestrian order through co-option (*adlectio*) by emperors. Emperors (Vespasianus, Marcus Aurelius and Septimius Severus) used this occasionally to replenish the senate.⁴ Only a minority of senate members succeeded in attaining a consulship. These men of consular rank constituted what is called 'the senatorial elite' in this study. These senators had gone through a considerable part of the senatorial *cursus honorum* and their backgrounds and careers are (relatively) well-documented.

High consular offices which continued to exist after the reforms of Diocletian were the (ordinary) consulate, the city prefecture of Rome, and the governorships of the provinces of Africa Proconsularis and Asia. It was in these posts that the power and status of the third-century senatorial elite manifested itself most clearly. Therefore these offices are a suitable focus for an analysis of continuity within the senatorial elite's position. The holders of these four offices are documented relatively well and are discussed in detail in several scholarly works.⁵ A list of holders of these offices can be found in Appendix 2.⁶

⁴ Cf. Hopkins and Burton in Hopkins (1983), 146, who stress that this 'was not a major method of normal recruitment'. Such *homines novi* thus immediately entered the senate and, in case of *adlectio inter consulares*, they instantly penetrated the senatorial elite. A well-known example of an *eques* who entered the senate through *adlectio* and then had a brilliant senatorial career is the emperor Pertinax (see Thomasson (1996), 73, no. 94, for a discussion of his career). From circa AD 250, such *Pertinaces* can no longer be detected in the available evidence.

⁵ See, for instance, Degraffi (1952) for consular *fasti*; Barbieri (1952) on senators between AD 193 and 285; lists of consuls, city prefects, *proconsules Africae* and *Asiae* in *PLRE* I, 1041–1075; Thomasson (1972–1990), 205–242, on the governors of Asia; Christol (1986), 97–136, on consuls and city prefects from 250 onward; Leunissen (1989) with lists of consuls, governors of Africa and Asia and city prefects between AD 180 and 235; Thomasson (1996) on governors of Africa, and the *fasti* in Johne-Gerhardt-Hartmann (2008), vol. 2, 1063–1189.

⁶ Only ordinary consulates (*consulatus ordinarii*) are included in this list, since their number is fixed at two per year, and the names of all the *consules ordinarii* are known to us including the dates of their consulates. Suffect consulships and their dates can usually only be deduced from the fact that a senator held a consular position, and there is no way to establish the number of *consules suffecti* between AD 193 and 284. Cf. Mommsen (1887), vol. 2, 84, on suffect consuls: 'The number of [suffect] pairs and the period for which they held office were extraordinarily unequal, and the latter hardly

Several *nomina (gentilicia)* recur on the list regularly. A closer examination shows that in quite a few cases it is plausible that men with similar names belonged to the same *gens*, or at least claimed dynastic connections with an aristocratic family. Admittedly, to trace actual kinship at the evidence of nomenclature is to thread on thin ice.⁷ Since late antique Romans seem at times to have fabricated connections with illustrious senatorial ancestors to impress contemporaries, we must stay aware that third-century Romans may have adopted this strategy as well. After all, ‘membership of a multi-generational family was an important component of Roman aristocratic identity.’⁸ Ammianus Marcellinus even made fun of those senators who gave themselves famous names.⁹ Epigraphic evidence in which actual kinship is confirmed is rare, let alone cases in which the nature of the relationship is named.¹⁰ Only in a very small number of cases can the epigraphic material be complemented by evidence from literary or legal sources. Therefore nomenclature often is our only indication for potential kinship between senators. Here, however,

ever seems to have been regularized [...]: ‘Die Zahl der Paare und die Fristen sind ausserordentlich ungleich und eine formelle Regulierung der letzteren scheint kaum je eingetreten zu sein [...]’. That is why *consules suffecti* are not included in the list. They are, however, taken into account in the analysis of senatorial elite families in the next section.

⁷ Salomies (1992) has shown once again that a firm set of rules for Roman polynomy—which item is adoptive, which represents the father’s family, which the mother’s, etc.—cannot be established.

⁸ Hillner (2003), 130. According to Hillner (130 ff.), a senator could stress his genealogy simply by inventing memories of alleged ancestors’ ownership of his house. While senatorial residences were conceived as symbols of lineage, ancestors’ genealogies were often fictitious. This practice demonstrates how powerful claims of illustrious ancestry was in Late Antiquity. Septimius Severus’ retrospective adoption into the Antonine dynasty (Dio 77, 9, 4; cf. *HA, Vita Sev.* 10, 6; Aurelius Victor, *Liber de Caesaribus* 20, 30; *BMCRE* V, 136, †) is a well-known third-century example of the strategy of inventing family relations. On this, see Birley (1988), 1; 117; 122, and Hekster (2002), 189–191, with further references.

⁹ Ammianus Marcellinus 28, 4, 7: *Praenomium claritudine conspicui quidam (ut putant) in immensum semet extollunt, cum Reburri et Flavonii et Pagonii Gereonesque appellentur, ac Dalii cum Tarracii et Ferasiis, aliisque ita decens sonantibus originum insignibus multis.* (‘Some men, distinguished (as they think) by famous fore-names, pride themselves beyond measure in being called Reburri, Flavonii, Pagonii, Gereones, and Dalii, along with Tarracii and Pherrasii and many other equally fine-sounding indications of eminent ancestry.’)

¹⁰ Hillner (2003), 132, puts it: ‘Epigraphic evidence is generally limited to a number of inscriptions found in the same area recording different members of the same *gens*.’ Although Hillner focuses on Late Antiquity in her article, these words also apply to the third-century evidence.

the question as to whether there was actual consanguinity between senators is of minor importance. Even if the relationship was invented, or based on adoption, it reflected the significance of belonging to a certain aristocratic *gens*. Apparently, belonging to or claiming to belong to a certain *gens* could increase one's chances to obtain top positions within the senatorial *cursus honorum*, namely to become *consul ordinarius*, *praefectus urbi*, *proconsul Africae* or *proconsul Asiae*.

In order to sort out those *gentes* which certainly belonged to the senatorial elite during a considerable part of the third century, two criteria applied: (a) at least three members holding one or more of the selected consular positions should be known to us, and (b) these members' careers should stretch over a total of at least two decades. The following eighteen *gentes* emerge as traceable: (1) the Acilii (Glabriones et Aviolae), (2) the Anicii, (3) the Bruttii, (4) the Caesonii, (5) the Catii, (6) the Claudii Pompeiani, (7) the Claudii Severi, (8) the Egnatii, (9) the Fulvii Aemiliani, (10) the Hedii Lolliani, (11) the Marii, (12) the Nummii, (13) the Pollieni, (14) the Pomponii, (15) the Postumii, (16) the Valerii, (17) the Vettii, and (18) the Virii.¹¹

Within the senatorial elite these families represent the percentages listed in Table 2.1. These indicate that members of these eighteen *gentes* held a substantial part of the examined offices between AD 193 and 284. Further analysis shows that these positions were occupied by members of these families throughout the third century. That means that one can argue that, at least during the third century, these families were able to create and/or maintain their position within the senatorial elite.¹² The

¹¹ Inevitably, applying these criteria excludes certain *gentes* which may have belonged to the third-century senatorial elite. For instance, the Ragonii: although more than three members of this *gens* are known to us, only two of them held a consulship between AD 193 and 284 (L. Ragonius Urinatus Tuscenius, *suffectus* ca. 210 and [L.] Ragonius Venustus, *consul ordinarius* 240). L. Ragonius Urinatus Larcus Quintianus was *suffectus* before 193, under Commodus, and L. Ragonius Quintianus was *consul ordinarius* in 289 (see Dietz (1980), 372, stemma 9). The same goes for the Aufidii from Pisaurum: Aufidius Fronto, *consul ordinarius* 199, and Aufidius Victorinus, *consul ordinarius* 200, were related, but it is unclear whether C. Aufidius Marcellus, *proconsul Asiae* 220/221; *consul II ordinarius* 226, also belonged to this *gens*. Moreover, I am aware that not only families of importance during the second century and the beginning of the third, but also *gentes* which became influential only at the end of the period under discussion have gone neglected. However, it must be kept in mind that the intention of this study is not to paint a complete picture of the entire third-century senatorial elite, but merely to point out continuity within this senatorial elite.

¹² The position of these families in the first and second centuries AD is looked at in some more detail in the Prosopography below.

following analysis will throw more light on the position of these families in the course of the third century.

Table 2.1. Representativeness of the selected families

Office	Total number of appointments known to us (AD 193–284)	Number of office holders belonging to selected families	Percentage
Ordinary consuls	131 ¹³	45–51 ¹⁴	34–39 %
City prefects	44	11–12 ¹⁵	25–27 %
Proconsuls Afr/Asia	70	12–14 ¹⁶	17–20 %

¹³ The total number of ordinary consuls between AD 193 and 284 was 184; in this table the 53 consulates (29 %) filled by emperors and their prospective heirs are excluded. If they were included, the percentage of ordinary consuls would be lower (24–28 %), but would nonetheless remain relatively high.

¹⁴ The number of *consules ordinarii* per family: 3 Acillii; 3 Bruttii; 2 Catii; 4 Claudii Pompeiani; 2 Claudii Severi; 1 Egnatius; 3 Fulvii; 2 Hedii; 3 Marii; 4 Nummii; 1 Pollienius; 2 Pomponii; 1 Postumius; 6 Valerii; 4 Vettii; and 4 Virii. Perhaps some others might be added, but their connections to these eighteen senatorial elite families are less certain: M. Laelius (Fulvius?) Maximus Aemilianus, *consul ordinarius* 227, may have been distantly related to the Fulvii. Bassus, *consul ordinarius* 259, may have been identical with Pomponius Bassus [...]stus, but this cannot be determined with certainty. The other *consul ordinarius* of 259, Aemilianus, cannot be identified with certainty either. It has been suggested that he was either identical with M. Laelius (Fulvius?) Maximus Aemilianus, or with Fulvius Aemilianus, *consul ordinarius* 244, or Fulvius Aemilianus, *consul ordinarius* 249. On this, see Christol (1986), 100, note 19. The same goes for Aemilianus, *consul ordinarius* 276. Furthermore it is uncertain whether Nummius Faus(t)ianus, *consul ordinarius* 262, was a member of the *gens Nummia*, and it has been suggested that Paulinus, *consul ordinarius* 277, was related to the Anicii.

¹⁵ City prefects per family: 1 Caesonius; 1(?) Claudius Severus; 1 Egnatius; 1 Marius; 1 Nummius appointed twice; 1 Pomponius; 2 Postumii; 1 Valerius; 2 Virii. On the doubtful cases: one member of the Claudii Severi, if the Severus mentioned in *Cod. Iust.* 4, 56, 2, was indeed identical with (Cn. Claudius?) Severus. On this, see Leunissen (1989), 176, note 211; one of the Fulvii Aemiliani may be added, if Groag's suggestion that Fulvius Gavius N[umisius ...] Aemilianus was city prefect in 249 was indeed right. See Dietz (1980), 165, with further references. For the moment, he has not been included in the count.

¹⁶ Proconsuls of Africa and/or Asia per family (men serving as *agens vice proconsulis* are not included in this count): 2 Anicii; 3 Caesonii; 1 Egnatius (three terms); 2 Hedii; 3 Marii; 1(?) Nummius; 1(?) Pollienius; 1 Valerius. On the doubtful cases: one of the Nummii, if the identification of Albinus with Nummius Umbrius Primus Senecio Albinus on *AE* 1933, 258 is correct. See Leunissen (1989), 226, note 72 for further references; one Pollienius, if Pollienius Auspex maior indeed held his proconsulship between AD 193 and 200 (and not before 193). Several men may perhaps be added, but for the moment they are not included in the count. Those men are: an Acilius Glabrio was governor of Africa, but the date cannot be determined with certainty. It may have been M(?). Acilius Glabrio in the third century, after 256, but it may also have been another member of the *gens* in the second century. On this matter, see Thomasson (1996), 94, no. 132; furthermore,

2.2. *Analyzing the Selected Families*

An indepth examination of these eighteen senatorial families will yield a clearer perception of the position of the members of these families, their careers, their backgrounds and origins, their social status, the relationships within the *gentes* and interrelations with other senatorial families.

Ideally, we could present a complete picture of these families and reconstruct their careers. The evidence, however, is too fragmentary. What we have is a number of inscriptions and, in some cases, literary or judicial sources mentioning these men, but only in very few cases does the evidence inform us of all the positions held by a person or of precise family connections. Often, the only indication for an individual's or family's geographical origin is the provenance of relevant inscriptions. Yet, fortunately there is one exception, one family of which a more or less complete picture can be painted: the *gens Caesonia*. The careers of three generations of this family's men can be reconstructed by means of several career inscriptions. Their careers coincide with Roman imperial history stretching from the reign of Marcus Aurelius until the reign of Diocletian. These careers, and the family's social position between AD 193 and 284, will serve as an illustrative example of continuity and will demonstrate the capacity of one family to even strengthen its position in the third century. Because the evidence is uniquely informative, the Caesonii may not be representative for all senatorial elite families. Yet they will form the starting point of my analysis, because their record, together with the more fragmentary information on the other families, can illustrate the position of the selected senatorial elite families throughout the third century and their role within imperial administration.

The Caesonii—The Course of the Third Century Reflected in Three Careers

Gaius Caesonius Macer Rufinianus, born around AD 155/160, was the first member of the *gens Caesonia* to hold a consulship.¹⁷ It is generally

another Pollienius may be added, if the suggestion in Eck (1983), 855, that Pollenius Armenius Peregrinus was *proconsul Asiae* is correct; and one Pomponius, if Pomponius Bassus [...]stus was indeed *proconsul Africae* or *Asiae*, as suggested by *PLRE I*, Bassus 17. For the moment, he has not been included in the count.

¹⁷ *PIR*² C 210. On this man and his career, see also Eck (1985), 76–77; Christol (1986), 160–162; Leunissen (1989), 388; Thomasson (1996), 86–87 no. 118; Badel-Bérenger (1998), 139–141. Caesonius was a Roman family name documented in the first century BC. See *DNP*, vol. 2, 929, s.v. Caesonius.

assumed that he had Italic roots.¹⁸ Beside the fact that his father was also called Gaius, nothing is known about his ancestors. Dietz claims that this Caesonius must have been a *homo novus* based on the fact that he started his career as a *triumvir capitalis*. However, Eck rightly notes that this argument cannot be considered decisive.¹⁹ Caesonius Macer Rufinianus married Manilia Lucilla, and it has been suggested that she was the sister or daughter of (Tiberius) Manilius Fuscus, *consul suffectus* in 196/7, *consul II ordinarius* in 225.²⁰ Caesonius' career can be outlined from an inscription on an epitaph set up by his son. This inscription found near Tibur mentions his entire career in inversed order.²¹

The start of Caesonius' senatorial career was not exceptional. Being one of the *vigintiviri*, he fulfilled a police-function in Rome as *triumvir capitalis*. This appointment cannot be dated precisely, but was probably at the end of the reign of Marcus Aurelius, just before Caesonius took his position as military *tribunus*, one of the members of staff of *legio I Adiutrix*. For this position Caesonius left Italy to go to Brigetio in Pannonia Superior, probably during Marcus' second expedition in Germania.²² Caesonius was about twenty years old at that time. It was while he held this function that the emperor granted his unit military honors (*dona militaria*), which is proudly mentioned in the inscription as well. The next step in his *cursus honorum* was a position as *quaestor* in Narbonensis after which he returned to Rome to become *tribunus plebis*, probably already under Commodus. About 185, he was sent to Hispania Baetica as *legatus* to assist the governor, and about two years later he became *praetor* and entered the next stage of his career.

Before reaching the consulship, his praetorian career included six or seven positions and can, therefore, be considered rather long. He assisted

¹⁸ Eck (1985), 76, and Leunissen (1989), 357, suggest that he was from Regio I, possibly from Antium. However, according to Jacques (1986), 168, the existence of several gentilic attestations from Italy was due to normal investments of an important senatorial family and does not indicate their geographical origin.

¹⁹ Dietz (1980), 104f.; Eck (1985), 76.

²⁰ L. Caesonius Lucillus Macer Rufinianus, the son of Caesonius and Manilia Lucilla, was one of the *Fratres Arvales*, which was an inherited priestly office. That is why Settapani suggests that Lucilla may have been connected to Ti. Manilius Fuscus (*PIR*² M 137), who was *Frater Arvalis* in 190. See Settapani (2000), 349, note 4.

²¹ *CIL* 14.3900 = *ILS* 1182 = *Inscr. It.* IV 1, 102 (Latium, Tibur). For an overview of his career and the careers of the other Caesonii, see the Prosopography at the end of this chapter.

²² Alföldy (1969), 146–147; Syme (1971), 159, contra Pflaum (1978), 84–85, who suggested that this office was held in 173.

the governor of Asia as *legatus* and subsequently held the first of several positions as Italic *curator* in his career. As *curator rei publicae* he probably executed a financial task in Asculum (Picenum), followed by another military function as *legatus* of *legio VII Claudia* at Viminacium in Moesia Superior. Next, he became *proconsul* of Achaia. Governing Greece was reserved for junior praetorian senators. After his proconsulship Caesonius returned to Italy to become *curator rei publicae* of Tarracina, a city in Latium, at the end of the reign of Commodus or not long after this emperor's death in 192.²³ He went to Spain for his next position as *legatus Augusti pro praetore*, governing Lusitania. It is not certain whether he had already been appointed when Septimius Severus was proclaimed emperor, or whether the new emperor appointed him, but he probably retained his position until he served as *consul suffectus* circa 197/198, when he was about forty years old. The consulship may have been a reward for taking part in putting down the rebellion of Lucius Novius Rufus, governor of Hispania Citerior and a supporter of Clodius Albinus, one of Severus' rivals.²⁴ This certainly would explain the further course of his career.

Just before or not long after his consulship, Caesonius was appointed to his third term as a *curator rei publicae*, this time in Teanum, a city in the northern part of Campania.²⁵ Around 198 he became responsible for the banks and channels of the Tiber as *curator alvei Tiberis*, a position which both his son and his grandson would occupy in the future. After this, probably around 200, Caesonius was appointed to his first consular governorship in Germania Superior. For his next post of *curator aquarum et Miniciae* he returned to Italy. Presumably he carried out this position sometime between 203 and 213, but the exact date and duration are unclear.²⁶ Caesonius' next office crowned his career: he was appointed *proconsul* to govern the economically important province of Africa. He may have held this position under Caracalla in 213/214 or 214/215, but

²³ Leunissen (1989), 388, suggests circa 193. For a date at the end of the reign of Commodus, see Eck (1999), 236.

²⁴ Alföldy (1969), 146; Christol (1986), 161; Leunissen (1989), 155 and 289.

²⁵ Christol (1986), 161, agrees with *PIR*² C 210 that this position must have been held before the consulship and that the post of *curator alvei Tiberis* must have been Caesonius' first consular task. Leunissen (1989), 388, suggests that the curatorship of Teanum was his first consular position.

²⁶ Christol (1986), 161, note 9, follows Pflaum (1978), 85, who suggests 204 or not much later. Here Pflaum rectifies the date of about 220, previously suggested by him. See Pflaum (1963), 234–237.

a date under Elagabalus or Severus Alexander has also been suggested.²⁷ Caesonius' task as *curator rei publicae* of Lavinium or Lanuvium, both of which are in Latium, brought him back to Italy once more. He held it twice, according to Eck at the end of the reign of Caracalla.²⁸ He was also *sodalis Augustalis*, but it is impossible to determine the exact chronological point of this priestly office within his career.

His career ended in a remarkable way: Caesonius Macer Rufinianus was *comes* of the emperor Severus Alexander, most probably during the latter's Persian campaign of AD 231–233. It seems unthinkable that the senator, who must have been over seventy years old during the Persian expedition, actually accompanied the emperor on this perilous and exhausting Eastern campaign. Suggestions that the title *comes* had developed into a title to indicate that someone was connected to the court, like *amicus*, might therefore very well be right.²⁹

The son of Caesonius Macer Rufinianus and his wife Manilia Lucilla was named Lucius Caesonius Lucillus Macer Rufinianus and was probably born around 195.³⁰ His career is known to us mainly from an inscription on a statue base also found near Tibur.³¹

He started his career as one of the *vigintiviri* with a judicial position as *decemvir stlitibus iudicandis* sometime at the beginning of the reign of Caracalla. At that time or not long afterwards, the family was accepted into the patriciate (*electus in familiam patriciam*). This can be seen in the career of Caesonius Lucillus Macer Rufinianus: he was appointed *quaestor* as imperial *candidatus* at the end of Caracalla's reign and became *praetor candidatus* after that, without any intervening offices, which was typical for a patrician career. His appointment as *praetor* came probably after the death of Caracalla under Elagabalus, around 220 / 222.³²

²⁷ Thomasson (1996), 86–87, suggests a date under Elagabalus or Severus Alexander and that, in this case, his son may have served as his father's *legatus* in Africa. He claims that there is not much space for a proconsulship during the reign of Caracalla. Christol (1986), 162, and Leunissen (1989), 388, suggest a date between 212 / 213 and 215.

²⁸ Eck (1985), 76, accepts Lavinium; Eck (1999), 234, accepts Lanuvium.

²⁹ Pflaum (1978), 85–86; see also Thomasson (1996), 87.

³⁰ Christol (1986), 162, note 15.

³¹ *CIL* 14.3902 = *ILS* 1186 = *Inscr. It.* IV I, 104 (Tibur, Italy). See also: *CIL* 6.2104b (Roma); *CIL* 6.37165 (Roma); *AE* 1915, 102 = *CIL* 6.39443 (Roma). For this Caesonius, see *PIR*² C 209 and Dietz (1980), 103 ff., no. 17; Christol (1986), 158–172; Leunissen (1989), 377; Thomasson (1996), 90, no. 122; Peachin (1996), 112–114.

³² Peachin (1996), 113, dates the first steps of his career somewhat earlier. He assumes that this Caesonius was *quaestor* in circa 212 and *praetor* in circa 217. In that case, both positions would have been carried out during the reign of Caracalla.

Like his father, Caesonius Lucillus Macer Rufinianus also served in several positions as *curator*, two of which followed immediately after his praetorship. First, he became *curator rei publicae* of Suessa, a city in Campania. For his second curatorship both Tusculum in Latium as Puteoli in Campania near Naples are suggested.³³ Either way, both positions were carried out in Italic cities. A post as *legatus* and simultaneously as deputy of the governor (*vice proconsulis*) brought him to Africa, where he would return later in his career, and consecutively led straight to his suffect consulship. These positions can be dated around 225 / 230, during the reign of Severus Alexander, at about the same time Caesonius' father was *comes* of this emperor.

Shortly after his consulship, the *curator alvei Tiberis et cloacarum urbis* became his first consular office. His next job as *curator aquarum et Miniciae*, the position which his father had also fulfilled, can be dated during the last years of Severus Alexander's reign, between 230 and 235. In 238 he was chosen as one of the *vigintiviri ex senatus consulto rei publicae curandae*, who, by senatorial decree, were to set the empire free from the senators' scourge, Maximinus Thrax. His membership in this committee shows the prestige that he held within the senate. Eventually, the committee of twenty succeeded. All the known members of the *vigintiviri* of 238 had successful careers.³⁴ Caesonius Lucillus Macer Rufinianus was awarded a proconsulship of Africa and returned to this province with which he was already familiar. It must have been about ten to fifteen years after his position as *legatus* and *vice proconsulis*, probably not before 240 / 241, considering his participation in meetings of the *fratres Arvales* in 239 and even in January 240.³⁵ Both the *Historia Augusta* and Zosimus mention the usurpation of a Sabinianus who was acclaimed emperor in Carthage in 240 and was struck down at the end of the year by the governor of Mauretania Caesariensis.³⁶ Caesonius may have been sent there to restore order in the province, which would mean that the emperor Gordianus III and his advisers put great trust in him. However, this is merely a conjecture.

That Caesonius concluded his career with a position as *praefectus urbi* and a judicial task as deputy of the emperor himself (*electus ad cognoscendas vice Caesaris cognitiones*), also implies that he enjoyed

³³ About the problem, see *PIR*² C 209 and also Thomasson (1996), 90.

³⁴ See Dietz (1980), 326–340.

³⁵ *CIL* 6.37165 (Roma); Thomasson (1996), 90, note 137.

³⁶ *HA, Vita Gord.* 23, 4; Zosimus 1, 17, 1.

imperial trust. Unfortunately, these last two offices cannot be dated more precisely than with a *terminus ante quem* of 254. So, although it is likely that they were also held during the reign of Gordianus III, as is suggested in *PIR*, they could also have been carried out under Philippus Arabs, Decius, Trebonianus Gallus, Aemilius Aemilianus or even Valerianus. It is also unclear whether the two positions were carried out simultaneously or consecutively.³⁷ A second consulship might have been expected, but Caesonius may have died before he could have been appointed. At any rate, Caesonius Lucillus Macer Rufinianus proved to be one of the more important senators during the first half of the third century, considered loyal by several emperors.

The next generation of the Caesonii was represented by Lucius Caesonius Ovinus Manlius Rufinianus Bassus.³⁸ He was the son of the above-mentioned Caesonius and a woman who probably descended from the *gens Ovinia*, which was important in the third century as well.³⁹ His career can be reconstructed from an honorary inscription from Aversa.⁴⁰

He must have been born during the reign of Severus Alexander between 225 and 230, and served in his first position about 240/245 under

³⁷ Peachin (1996), 114, deals with the problem of dating these positions. He locates Caesonius as *vice Caesaris* in Rome between 242 and 244, when Gordianus III was conducting his *expeditio Orientalis*, and thinks this position was prior to the prefecture of the city. He suggests that Caesonius laid down his position as judge when Philippus returned to Rome and that he was then named *praefectus urbi*, circa 246. However, Peachin admits that the epigraphic evidence supplies no precision in this regard.

³⁸ *PIR*² C 212; *PIR*² O 186; *PLRE* I, Bassus 18. See also Christol (1986), 158–176; Thomasson (1996), 93–94, no. 130.

³⁹ According to Settapani (2000), 351, this Caesonius was married to an (Ovinia), who was probably the sister of (L. Ovinus) Pacatianus, who was in his turn married with Cornelia Optata A[quila?] Flavia ..., the sister of Cn. Cornelius Paternus, *consul ordinarius* 233. Settapani suggests that L. Ovinus Rusticus Cornelianus, *consul suffectus* in the middle of the third century, and Ovinus Pacatianus, *praefectus urbi* 276, may have been their children, and that an Ovinus Iulius Aquilus (?) Nonius Paternus, *consul ordinarius* 267?, *consul II ordinarius* 279, *praefectus urbi* 281, may have been their grandson. However, he admits that there are too many uncertainties about the Ovinii to construct a *stemma*. That is why this family has not been included in the list of senatorial elite families discussed here.

⁴⁰ *AE* 1964, 223 (Aversa, Italy). He is also known from three other inscriptions (*CIL* 10.1687 = *ILS* 1206 (Puteoli, Italy); *AE* 1945, 21 (Roma); *AE* 1968, 109 (Fundi, Italy), which add little to our knowledge of his career. According to Christol (1986), 167–176, they refer to the homonymic son of the *consul suffectus* circa 260. This theory, however, has not been adopted by many scholars. See Leunissen (1989), 202, note 318, and Thomasson (1996), 93, note 137. Even if Christol's assumption is correct, this would only point to another successful generation of the Caesonii within the third century, and would support my argument.

Gordianus III or Philippus Arabs. Like his grandfather he started his career as *triumvir capitalis*. Next, he became *sevir turmae deducendae* (*equitum Romanorum*), commander of one of the six squadrons (*turmae*) of *equites* and responsible for organizing games, which involved great financial responsibility. As a patrician, the next steps in his career were *quaestor candidatus* and *praetor candidatus*.

His praetorian career was short. Two stints as *curator rei publicae* led him directly to the consulate. His first curatorship was carried out in Beneventum in the southern part of Italy and the second one in Lavinium in Latium led him to a city where his grandfather may also have served as curator. He held a consulship around 260, probably as *consul suffectus*.⁴¹ At that point his career had survived the many upheavals of imperial power during the 250s.

His consular career started with a position as *curator alvei Tiberis et cloacarum sacrae urbis*, following after both his father and his grandfather. He held several positions in Africa, a province he may have known from accompanying his father during his proconsulship. However, this may have interfered with the start of his own *cursus honorum*. This Caesonius was *legatus* of Carthage, *curator* of the Colonia Carthaginensium and finally *proconsul Africae* for three years in a row. The three African offices are mentioned in succession on his career inscription, but it is doubtful whether they were actually fulfilled consecutively. It has been suggested by both Eck and Christol that the positions of *legatus* and *curator* belonged to the praetorian part of his career.⁴² The functions may have been clustered in the inscription because they were all fulfilled in the same area. The proconsulship of Africa, dated around 275 under Aurelianus and/or Tacitus, did not mean that this man's career ended. On the contrary, the emperor Probus chose him to chair the *iudicium magnum*, probably a court of appeal at Rome. After this, he carried out some other judicial functions under Probus. He was appointed judge (*iudex*) as deputy of the emperor himself (*vice Caesaris*) in cases involving the imperial treasury (*fiscus*) and private individuals, and cases between private persons themselves.⁴³ At first, he carried out this office in Rome, probably between 276 and 281, and later, presumably during the last years of

⁴¹ It has been suggested that he was identical with the Bassus, who was *consul ordinarius* in 259. See Christol (1986), 100–101.

⁴² *RE* Suppl. 14, 82; Christol (1986), 163–164.

⁴³ It is unclear whether this position was first exercised *inter fiscum et privatos* and later only (*item*) *inter privatos*, or whether the categories did not change. See Christol (1986), 166.

the reign of Probus (281 / 282), also in Africa. The title *comes Augustorum duorum* was probably bestowed upon him between 283 and 285, when Carus and Carinus or Carinus and Numerianus were joint emperors.

Two more offices are mentioned in the inscriptions: a second consulship and a position as prefect of the city Rome. The consulship can be dated around 284 and was presumably a suffect one, which was quite unique. After AD 104, all the *consules iterum* had been *ordinarii*.⁴⁴ However, most of the positions of *consules ordinarii* from 283 to 285 were held by the emperors themselves, so there was hardly any space for non-imperial *consules ordinarii* in those years, which may explain this uncommon situation. The consulship may have coincided with the position of *praefectus urbi*. It is striking that this Caesonius is not mentioned in the list of city prefects of the Chronographer of 354. Scholars usually explain this by suggesting that Caesonius was not *praefectus* of Rome at the first of January, but was appointed in the middle of a year to replace someone else.⁴⁵ The exact year in which he performed this function is uncertain, but it was probably around 285, during or just before the start of the reign of Diocletian. According to the inscription, Caesonius was also *salius Palatinus*, *pontifex maior* and *pontifex dei Solis*. Only the last priestly office can be dated, although not precisely, since this office only came into use under Aurelianus in 274.

Another function is mentioned only fragmentary in another inscription: *pr[...] Jones tracto Piceno*.⁴⁶ Unfortunately, this function cannot be defined with certainty. Suggested solutions are *praefectus adversus latrones* (against brigands), *praefectus annonae (sic)* (responsible for the corn crop) and *praefectus ad tirones* (to select recruits).⁴⁷ Besides the fact that the function cannot be determined, it is also problematic that the position within the career cannot be established, since in this inscription the functions seem not to be in chronological order.

A Caesonius Bassus was *consul ordinarius* in 317. He was probably the son or rather the grandson of Caesonius Ovinius Manlius Rufinianus Bassus. At the end of the third century, the Caesonii became connected to the Anicii, another third-century senatorial elite *gens* (see below) probably through nuptial bonds.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ See *RE Suppl.* 14, 82.

⁴⁵ See under *PIR*² O 186.

⁴⁶ *AE* 1968, 109 (Fundi, Italy).

⁴⁷ See *RE Suppl.* 14, 83, by Eck, who prefers the solution suggested by Barbieri of *pr[ae]fectus ad tiriones*.

⁴⁸ On Caesonius Bassus, consul in 317, see *PLRE* I, Bassus 12. According to Jacques

Observations on the Careers and Position of the Caesonii in the Third Century

Within a century the Caesonii seem to have developed from a rather ordinary senatorial, perhaps originally even equestrian, family into a patrician clan whose members had flourishing careers under many emperors of the third century. The family does not seem to have suffered from the numerous changes of imperial power which appeared especially after AD 238. Quite the contrary. The most impressive appointments within the careers of the Caesonii can be dated after that critical year.

Many similarities emerge between the careers of the three Caesonii. Caesonius Lucillus Macer Rufinianus and his son carried out both their quaestorship and their praetorship as *candidati* of the emperor. This demonstrates imperial favor as well as their patrician status. Typical of a patrician career is also the relatively low number of offices between the praetorship and the consulship within their careers.

The number of positions, mainly curatorships, in which the Caesonii served in Italy is considerable. The position of *curator aquarum*, the prefecture of Rome, and possibly also the curatorship of Lavinium, were held by two of them. The post of *curator alvei Tiberis* even appears in all of their careers. In addition to Italy, Africa was a region in which all of them were active. All three of them reached the high post of *proconsul* of Africa. In this way the emperors took a certain risk by enabling the family to build up a social network in Africa. The risk of usurpation grew when a family had connections in a certain area and could lead to situations comparable to the seizure of power by the Gordiani in the years 238 to 244. Their knowledge of the province may have outweighed precautionary measures against usurpation.

In any case, emperors' confidence in the Caesonii was not misplaced: none of them abused their power. On the other hand, after 238, military commanders, not senators, presented the greatest threat to the imperial throne. Military experience, military power and social networks among military officers became sources of power from 240 onward. Those were exactly the qualities that the Caesonii lacked. The positions they held mainly gave them experience in the administrative, financial and legal

(1986), 168, Bassus' consular colleague Ovinus Gallicanus may have been a relative. The names of M. Iunius Caesonius Nicomachus Anicius Faustus Paulinus, *praetor urbanus* 321, and Amnius Manius Caesonius Nicomachus Anicius Paulinus, *consul* 334, *praefectus urbi* 334–335, support the assumption that the Caesonii and Anicii became connected in the fourth century. See Settipani (2000), 347–348.

spheres, but hardly any knowledge of the military, and some offices involved more honor than actual power.

Two specific events bolstered the position of the Caesonii between Marcus Aurelius and Diocletian. First, Caesonius Macer Rufinianus' support for Septimius Severus against Clodius Albinus brought the family consular and patrician status and put them on the map as an important senatorial elite family. Second, Caesonius Lucillus Macer Rufinianus' involvement among the *vigintiviri* in 238 enabled them to maintain their position during a chaotic period and to rise to the highest possible positions within a senatorial career and some intriguing special tasks in direct service to the emperors. Throughout the rest of this period of about a hundred years, the Caesonii seem to have kept low profile, remaining loyal to most emperors, but never so bound to one emperor in particular that his death would cause danger to them. In this way, they were able to survive the chaos and transformations of the third century crises. Establishing relations with other senatorial elite families strengthened the position of the Caesonii even further and enabled them to remain important after 284 as well.

The Senatorial Elite Families—Main Observations

As has been stated before, the evidence for the careers of the Caesonii is uniquely extensive for the third century. Of the remaining families, of whom members were prominent in key functions, only fragmentary evidence survives. However, the evidence of developments and relations in similarly elite families largely parallels the Caesonian careers and position. By combining the results of the complete record of the *gens Caesonii* with the fragmentary evidence on these other families, I have been able both to expand my theory of such senatorial elite families' continuing hold on positions which involved status and power and to define a senatorial nucleus within the third-century senatorial elite. A more detailed prosopographical account appears at the end of this chapter. Here, the main observations are summarized and illustrated with examples from this prosopography.

The first observation is that the analyzed families were particularly bound to Italy. A considerable number of these *gentes* seems, like the Caesonii, to have had Italic roots. In eight cases (44%), Italic origin seems most likely, while in seven other cases (39%) Italy has been suggested as a possible homeland (see Table 2.2).

Table 2.2 Geographic origin of the selected families

<i>Gens</i>	<i>Geographic origin</i>
Acilii	Probably Italy
Anicii	Africa (Uzappa) or Italy (Praeneste)
Bruttii	Italy (Volcei, Lucania)
Caesonii	Italy (Regio I, Antium?)
Catii	Dalmatia, Gallia or N-Italy
Claudii Pompeiani	Syria (Antiocheia ad Orontem)
Claudii Severi	Galatia (Pompeiopolis)
Egnatii	Bithynia, Numidia or Italy (Etruria)
Fulvii Aemiliani	Italy
Hedii Lolliani	Italy (Liguria)
Marii	Africa or Italy
Nummii	N-Italy (Brixia) or S-Italy (Beneventum)
Pollieni	Italy
Pomponii	Italy
Postumii	Numidia
Valerii	Italy (Lavinium, Latium)
Vettii	Africa, Gallia Narbonensis or Italy
Virii	Asia Minor or N-Italy

Such suggestions are based mostly on funerary inscriptions, epigraphic evidence pointing at regional landownership, or inscriptions honoring *patroni* or commemorating a person's benefactions to a city. As stressed before, they are rarely confirmed by other evidence. Obviously it should be noted here that establishing a senatorial family's geographic origin is problematic.⁴⁹ Provincial newcomers in the senate were expected to invest capital (i.e. acquire landed property) in Italy, which in some cases causes trouble in determining a family's origin.⁵⁰ Talbert, however, suggests that this requirement may soon have lapsed, since 'the amount of surviving evidence for ownership of Italian property by provincial senators is puzzlingly small'.⁵¹ He adds that there must have been many

⁴⁹ Cf. Hopkins and Burton in Hopkins (1983), 144, on Hammond (1957): 'His precise conclusions depend on the reliability of the attributions of origin, which are often debatable [...].'

⁵⁰ From Plinius, *Epistulae* 6, 19, we learn that Traianus had ordered candidates for public office to invest a third of their capital in Italian land. *HA, Vita Marc.* 11, 8, reports that Marcus Aurelius demanded from senators of non-Italian origin that they invested one quarter of their capital in Italy. On the financial obligations of senators, see also Talbert (1984), 54–66.

⁵¹ Talbert (1984), 56. Cf. Hopkins and Burton in Hopkins (1983), 189, note 93, who argue that 'the reduction in the required proportion implies that it was difficult to secure compliance.'

provincial senators who re-moved altogether to Italy and points out the remark of Paulus who ‘makes the striking point that a senator removed from the order is restored to his country of origin only by special request.’⁵² Kriekhaus has demonstrated for the first and second centuries AD that senatorial families, even though they entered a new environment in Rome, were clearly still very much attached to their old *patriae* economically, socially and emotionally.⁵³ Kriekhaus’ study has confirmed the earlier view of Eck, who has also included the third century AD in his examination, and argued against underestimating the continuing strength of ties between senators and their old *patriae*.⁵⁴ That the eighteen families in my analysis were so strongly connected in Italy is therefore all the more significant. Apparently, they were so well-integrated in Italy and Rome that their attachment to the Italic peninsula equalled or even exceeded their connection with their *patria*. Therefore, with the majority of these families it is difficult to specify Italian or provincial origins. Only in three of the eighteen cases (17%) can Italic origins be excluded with certainty: the Claudii Pompeiani, the Claudii Severi and the Postumii. By the third century, however, these *gentes* must have been fully integrated into Rome as well, as nuptial bonds had connected these families with the emperors Marcus Aurelius and Pertinax.⁵⁵ Thus, it seems safe to argue that all the analyzed families either had Italic roots or were otherwise strongly bound to Italy and Rome by the third century. Furthermore, only a very small minority of the analyzed *gentes* show obvious signs of eastern origins. This is striking, since from the second century onward the number of easterners rose steadily within the senate.⁵⁶

⁵² Talbert (1984), 56, referring to *Digesta* 50, 1, 22, 4.

⁵³ Kriekhaus (2006).

⁵⁴ Eck (1980), 318. A different view was expressed by Syme in the posthumously edited and published Syme (1999), 4: ‘A generation or two of service would loosen the links that bound a family to the town or province of its origin.’ Cf. Kriekhaus (2006), 7. See also *id.*, 15, where Kriekhaus argues that from the Severan era onwards the concepts *patria* and *origo* became exchangeable in the ancient legal sources.

⁵⁵ Both Claudius Pompeianus and Claudius Severus (*consules II ordinarii* 173) were married to daughters of Marcus Aurelius. The Postumii probably descended from Flavius Claudius Sulpicianus, father-in-law of Pertinax.

⁵⁶ Halfmann (1979) See also Hammond (1957), who argues that in AD 69–79, 17% of known senators whose origins were known were of provincial origin, chiefly (70%) from the western provinces, and that AD 193–212, 57% of all known senators came from the provinces; 58% of them were from eastern provinces. Cf. Hopkins and Burton in Hopkins (1983), 144–145.

Besides these strong ties with Italy, analysis demonstrates that the majority of the eighteen families reached patrician status at some point. This status is not always mentioned explicitly, but in several cases it can be deduced from the fact that a person was an imperial *candidatus* or *triumvir monetalis*.⁵⁷ Six of the examined *gentes* (33 %) certainly were patrician; three of them had obtained this status well before 193, and the other three were accepted into the patriciate in the course of the third century. Another third may have had patrician status. Most of the families which entered the patriciate between AD 193 and 284 had already been appointed into (ordinary) consulates, proconsulships and the city prefecture well before they reached patrician rank.

Table 2.3 Patrician status of the selected families

<i>Gens</i>	<i>Patrician status</i>
Acilii	From 1st century AD
Anicii	From ca. 230 / 250
Bruttii	Under Antoninus Pius (ca. 160)
Caesonii	Under Caracalla (ca. 212 / 217)
Catii	No indications
Claudii Pompeiani	Possibly before 228
Claudii Severi	No indications
Egnatii	No indications
Fulvii Aemiliani	Possibly under Marcus Aurelius (ca. 169)
Hedii Lolliani	Ca. 170 / 184
Marii	No indications
Nummii	Possibly ca. 191 / 199
Pollieni	No indications
Pomponii	No indications
Postumii	Possibly before 272
Valerii	Possibly since the Republican period
Vettii	Ca. 200 or 220 / 225
Virii	Possibly ca. 240 / 250

For the remaining six families (33 %) there are no indications that they were accepted into the patriciate (see Table 2.3). They were either no longer accepted into the patriciate, or the explicit mention of patrician status or reference to it in inscriptions no longer necessarily signified elevated status. There are at least some indications for a certain devaluation of patrician status among the senatorial elite in the course of the

⁵⁷ Christol (1986), 61–62.

third century here. However, as said, the majority of the analyzed families seems to have reached patrician status at some point.

This group with strong connections with the Italic peninsula and a relatively high percentage of patricians thus appears regularly on the list of consuls, proconsuls, and city prefects between 193 and 284. In the case of the Caesonii we could furthermore notice a number of similarities within the careers of the members of this *gens*, for instance that relatively many positions were carried out in Italy and Africa. Moreover, a gradual reduction of positions involving military responsibility and a steady increase of positions in the administrative, financial and legal spheres is traceable within their careers. Unfortunately, many of the careers of the members of the other analyzed *gentes* have not come down to us completely. Yet, if we look at those parts of their careers known to us, some of these Caesonian features emerge.

Like the Caesonii, the other analyzed senatorial elite families were frequently appointed to positions in Rome and Italy. Also like the Caesonii, they continued to hold positions in Africa, Asia and other regions which were not heavily struck by warfare in the period under discussion, such as Spain and Greece (Achaia). There are some cases in which members of the same *gens* were repeatedly delegated to the same geographic area, like the Anicii in Africa and Numidia, the Hedii Lolliani in Hispania Citerior, and the Marii in Syria.⁵⁸ Yet there is too little evidence to determine whether this indicates a pattern in third-century appointment policies. It can be noted however that the prosopographic and administrative continuity in these regions corresponds with Witschel's findings: in his study on the effects of third-century crises in the Roman West, based mainly on archaeological and epigraphic evidence, he finds economic continuity in these areas.⁵⁹ Appointments of the analyzed senatorial elites in regions which suffered from repeated invasions and enduring war-

⁵⁸ Anicius Faustus was *legatus* in Numidia in 197–201. His descendant Cocceius Anicius Faustus Flavianus was *curator* in Cirta (Numidia) in 251, and then in the 260s Cocceius Anicius Faustus Paulinus was *proconsul Africae*. Hedi Rufus Lollianus Gentianus was *tribunus militum* and later governor and *censitor* in Hispania Citerior, in the late second century. His son (Hedius) Lollianus Plautius Avitus was *iuridicus* in northern Spain and *legatus legionis* in Hispania Citerior, probably early third century. Marius Perpetuus was *tribunus legionis* in Syria and later *legatus legionis* in Syria Coele early third century. His brother Marius Maximus became governor of the province of Syria Coele under Septimius Severus as well.

⁵⁹ Especially in North Africa, Witschel (2004), 267–269, observes a 'conservative urban culture' and 'stagnation at a high level without longterm negative effects'. Cf. id. (1999).

fare, such as the provinces of Moesia, Dacia, Germania and Syria, were largely restricted to the early third century and became very rare from 240 onwards.

Concurrently, the type of positions held by members of these *gentes* seems gradually to have changed: the evidence points to an increasing tendency towards selecting these senatorial elite members for civil-administrative, financial and legal offices, especially in the relatively peaceful areas mentioned above. These senators are frequently attested as *curator*, *corrector*, *iudex* (*vice sacra*), *iuridicus*, and *consistor*. Their social pre-eminence, wealth and education made members of the senatorial elite particularly suitable for these regulatory and adjudicatory posts.⁶⁰ Yet, as has been noted, after about 240 they are no longer attested as governors of provinces in which legions were stationed.⁶¹ These positions went increasingly to equestrian men with abundant military experience, as will be discussed in Chapter 3. Some examples from the analysis illustrate this development: Anicius Faustus was governor of Numidia and Moesia Superior under Septimius Severus. His son Anicius Faustus Paulinus governed Moesia Inferior under Severus Alexander. Yet, from the next generation of Anicii no one was appointed as provincial governor. Cocceius Anicius Faustus Flavianus is only known to have been *curator rei publicae* in Cirta (Numidia) in 251. Cadius Celer was the last member of the Cadii known to us who held a provincial governorship, in Moesia Superior in 242. The Egnatii, who were governors of provinces with legions under Septimius Severus (Egnatius Victor in Pannonia Superior), and still under Severus Alexander (Egnatius Victor Marinianus in Arabia and Moesia Superior, and perhaps Egnatius Victor Lollianus in Pannonia Inferior) are not attested as governors of militarily relevant provinces after 235. The same can be said about the Pollieni:

⁶⁰ The prime function of *curatores (rei publicae)* was to investigate and supervise, on a short-term basis, the finances of individual civic communities; in the provinces they could supplement the powers of provincial governors. *Correctores* also fulfilled regulatory and adjudicatory duties, but they possessed *imperium* and their powers were more wide-ranging than those of *curatores*. *Iudices* were private persons appointed to conduct hearings. In the Late Empire the use of the term became much wider: any official with jurisdiction or administrative power was so called (cf. *Cod. Iust.* 3, 1, 14, 1). *Iuridici* were officials of praetorian rank who performed judicial functions in civil cases in Italy: they were appointed by the emperor and assigned to particular districts. A *consistor* was a tax officer. See *OCD*, s.v. *corrector*; *curator*; *curator rei publicae*; *iudex*; and *iuridicus*. On the *curatores* in Rome, see also Bruun (2006).

⁶¹ Thus this process seems to have started well before the reigns of Valerianus and Gallienus. *Pace Lo Cascio* (2005), 160.

Pollienus Auspex minor governed Hispania Tarraconensis, Moesia Inferior and Britannia probably under Septimius Severus or Severus Alexander; Iulius Pollienus Auspex was *legatus* of Numidia between 212 and 222. Pollenius Armenius Peregrinus, a member of the next generation, was *proconsul* of Lycia et Pamphylia, a region in which no legion was stationed, circa 243. Even Postumius Varus, who held a military position as *legatus legionis* in Britannia shortly before 250, is not attested as governor of a militarily relevant province thereafter, and neither are his relatives. An exception to the rule seems to have been Virius Lupus, who is attested as *praeses* of Arabia and Syria Coele between 259 and 270. The use of the term *praeses*, however, may be significant here, perhaps indicating that he had restricted responsibilities: indeed, he probably held these positions while Odaenathus was basically governing the East, who obviously held most of the military responsibility in that area in those days.⁶² Thus, the senators belonging to the analyzed *gentes* were increasingly deployed in those parts of the Empire that were not heavily struck by repeated invasions and enduring warfare and that had a traditionally high status. As always these senators were both well qualified to govern these parts of the Empire and were acceptable to local aristocracies in those relatively rich, developed areas. In this way, they were still appointed to positions which were prestigious, but which did not involve too much actual military power.

2.3. Defining a Nucleus within the Senatorial Elite

As has been demonstrated by this analysis and discussed in the previous section, the *gentes* that held a considerable proportion of the (ordinary) consulates, proconsulships in Africa and Asia and city prefectures in Rome between AD 193 and 284 had several points in common: (a) they constituted a group with a relatively high percentage of patricians, which (b) was strongly connected to the Italic peninsula and the city of Rome, and which (c) was, especially when third-century crises were coming to a head from 240 until 284, particularly mobilized in the non-military sphere and in geographical areas which were not struck by long-term crises. Regularly holding the most prestigious consular positions of the senatorial *cursus honorum*, this group of families can obviously be con-

⁶² On Virius Lupus in the East under Odaenathus, see Hartmann (2001), 192, although he does not go into more detail on Virius Lupus' activities.

sidered a significant stratum within the senatorial elite. They managed to maintain or increase their power and status during a substantial proportion of the period under discussion, thus forming a nucleus within the senatorial elite (see Figure 2.1).

Despite, or perhaps due to, the gradual decline of military responsibility, these families evidently strived for continuation of membership in this senatorial nucleus: they took strategic measures to ensure intergenerational participation. They established ties with each other through intermarriage, and adoption was employed to compensate for cases where no (male) children survived into adulthood. In this way, alliances were created between families and property, wealth and status was transmitted smoothly. Moreover, with such strategic alliances the elite families guaranteed cultural homogeneity among themselves, avoiding large-scale intrusions of 'new' generations who—in their eyes—did not have the appropriate *paideia*. As discussed above, the Caesonii were connected to the *gens Ovinia* through nuptial bonds, and they apparently established relations with the Anicii at the end of the third century as well, as the nomenclature of fourth-century members of the *gens* suggests: Iunius Caesonius Nicomachus Anicius Faustus Paulinus and Amnius Manius Caesonius Nicomachus Anicius Paulinus.⁶³ The Anicii may also have maintained relations with the Hedii.⁶⁴ As it seems, the third-century Postumii descended from Postumius Festus, *consul suffectus* in 160. His daughter married Flavius Titianus, grandson of an *eques* who had been governor of Egypt under Hadrianus and son of Flavius Claudius Sulpicianus. The latter's daughter married Pertinax and thus became empress in 193.⁶⁵ Valerius Claudius Acilius Priscillianus Maximus' name indicates that the Valerii united with the Acilii at some point in the third century. When he was *consul iterum* in 256, his colleague Acilius Glabrio apparently was a relative.⁶⁶ Suggestions that the *gens Fulvia Aemiliana* was related to the *gens Bruttia* have been made, based on the nomenclature of the *consul II ordinarius* in 180, L. Fulvius ... C. Bruttius Praesens.⁶⁷ An Egnatius Proculus who held a suffect consulship at an uncertain date seems to have been the son-in-law of Marius Perpetuus, *consul*

⁶³ See Settapani (2000), 347–348.

⁶⁴ See *PLRE I*, Paulinus 16; Settapani (2000), 406–407.

⁶⁵ See Settapani (2000), 373, for a stemma.

⁶⁶ See Settapani (2000), 227–228 for hypotheses on the alliance.

⁶⁷ Dietz (1980), 161–163.

ordinarius 237.⁶⁸ The Egnatii Proculi probably belonged to a separate branch, but seem to have been related to the Egnatii Victores. That intensifying relations with other *gentes* through nuptial bonds and adoption could have far-reaching results is demonstrated by the example of these Egnatii and the Hedii Lolliani. The sister of the Hedii Lolliani who were *consules ordinarii* in 209 and 211 married one of the Egnatii (Egnatius Victor, *consul suffectus* before 207).⁶⁹ Their daughter, (Egnatia) Mariniana married the future emperor Publius Licinius Valerianus and gave birth to the future emperor Publius Licinius Egnatius Gallienus. Although the name Lollianus thus disappears from the consular *fasti* after 225, the family merged with the Egnatii and later with the Licinii. In this way, the family remained important, though less prominent, until Gallienus was killed in 268 and probably took most of his relatives down with him. The example demonstrates not only the positive results of strategic familial alliances, but also the fact that they were still no guarantee for continuity.

While the prospects for social mobility gradually increased from the second century onward and more and more *homines novi* entered the *ordo senatorius*, the possibilities of penetrating this senatorial inner circle must have been severely restricted. In his book on the urban elites of third-century Roman Egypt, Tacoma states that local elites, as it was usually thought,

consisted of a limited number of families that stayed in power for generations on end. They closely guarded their privileged position. [...] As a consequence of the fact that children inherited the wealth and power of their parents and married with children of families of similar wealth, these families formed a close group, with little room for outsiders.⁷⁰

Although Tacoma stresses that continuity for more than two generations was likely the exception rather than the rule for the Egyptian urban elites, he observes that some families in Egypt remained part of the elite for many generations. Tacoma argues that the position of the urban elites in third-century Egypt was fragile and introduces the concept of 'cyclical mobility', which implies that if elites failed to replace themselves, a sub-elite which presumably strove for elite status stood

⁶⁸ Or, more unlikely, he was son-in-law of the Marius Perpetuus who was *consul suffectus* circa 203. On this matter, see *PIR*² E 31; Dietz (1980) 189; Settapani (2000), 399.

⁶⁹ Q. (Hedius) Lollianus Plautius Avitus was *consul ordinarius* in 209 and (Hedius) Terentius Genticianus in 211.

⁷⁰ Tacoma (2006), 231.

ready to fill the vacancies.⁷¹ This concept of elite circulation seems also to have been applicable to the central senatorial elite dealt with in this chapter: obviously, some families remained part of the senatorial nucleus for many generations, so there seems to have been intergenerational continuity. Although this continuity was never guaranteed, there were ways to enhance the chances. As the capacity of the third-century urban elites in Egypt to remain in power should not be underestimated, as Tacoma argues, neither should the capacity of central elite families who belonged to the senatorial inner circle. As demonstrated above, strategic alliances through marriage and adoption were of paramount importance and could even for a generation create the impression that a child continued both lines, although eventually continuity remained reserved for the paternal branch. A (possibly fictitious) anecdote of the emperor Valerianus, visiting public baths with his general staff, shows how elites would manipulate adoption strategically. Through Ulpian Crinitus, who allegedly was the general in command of the Illyrian and Thracian frontier, the author of the *Historia Augusta* says:

According to the custom of our ancestors, Valerian Augustus,—a custom which my own family had held particularly dear,—men of the highest birth have always chosen the most courageous to be their sons, in order that those families which either were dying out or had lost their offspring by marriage might gain luster from the fertility of a borrowed stock.⁷²

In the end, it was membership in the senatorial nucleus, not the history of a person's family that was important. Tacoma's statements that 'elite marriages were endogamous in a social and geographical respect' and 'isogamous in that marriages occurred between people of roughly equal status' also applies for the senatorial elite families examined here.⁷³

Yet, if despite all these possibilities for strategic alliances the senatorial inner circle failed to regenerate itself, opportunities permitted sub-elite to penetrate the senatorial nucleus. It is noteworthy that more than two-third (67 %) of the analyzed *gentes* who eventually belonged to the senatorial nucleus defined here reached consular rank and thus joined the central senatorial elite during the reigns of Marcus Aurelius (28 %) or Septimius Severus (39 %) (see Table 2.4).

⁷¹ Tacoma (2006), 156–160; 232.

⁷² *HA, Vita Aurel.* 14, 5.

⁷³ Tacoma (2006), 242–243.

Table 2.4 Years in which the selected families reached consular rank

<i>Gens</i>	<i>Consular from</i>
Acilii	AD 24 (Tiberius)
Anicii	AD 198 (Septimius Severus)
Bruttii	AD 118/119 (Hadrianus)
Caesonii	AD 197/198 (Septimius Severus)
Catii	2nd century AD (Antoninus Pius?)
Claudii Pompeiani	Circa AD 167 (Marcus Aurelius)
Claudii Severi	AD 112 (Traianus)
Egnatii	AD 207 (Septimius Severus)
Fulvii Aemiliani	AD 155/160 (Marcus Aurelius)
Hedii Lolliani	AD 114 (Traianus)
Marii	AD 199/200 (Septimius Severus)
Nummii	AD 206 (Septimius Severus)
Pollieni	AD 170/175 (Marcus Aurelius)
Pomponii	AD 94 (Domitianus)
Postumii	AD 160 (Marcus Aurelius)
Valerii	509 BC (Republican era)
Vettii	AD 175/176 (Marcus Aurelius)
Virii	AD 196/197 (Septimius Severus)

The widespread pestilences and the many wars which afflicted the Empire under Marcus Aurelius, and the Parthian wars, but especially the civil wars and the resulting senatorial executions and confiscations under Septimius Severus may have prevented the central senatorial elite in general and the senatorial nucleus in particular to reproduce.⁷⁴ This would explain the relatively large group of consular newcomers during those reigns: there was a need for renewal. Ironically, some of those newcomers were successful *homines novi*, who seem to have been rewarded for their loyalty in military crises, as was the case with Claudius Pompeianus, general under Marcus Aurelius, and Marius Maximus and Virius Lupus, generals who were mobilized by Septimius Severus during his early reign (see Chapter 4).

⁷⁴ On the wars and pestilence under Marcus Aurelius, see, for instance, Eutropius, *Breviarium* 8, 12–14; on the impact of the Antonine plague and its consequences for demographic developments, see, for instance, Duncan-Jones (1996); Bagnall (2000); Scheidel (2002); Bruun (2003); on the executions and confiscations among senators under Septimius Severus, see Dio 76, 8, 4, pp. 214–215; *HA, Vita Sev.* 12–13; Birley (1988), 127–128. Cf. Hahn-Leunissen (1990), 68 and 61, summarizing risks to which senators were exposed as follows: a violent end by imperial mandate, death in battle, death as a result of disease contracted while on campaign, and exile. Clearly, the number of risks for senators decreased in the third century when not only did they rarely participate in campaigns, but increasing imperial absence in Rome helped them escape emperors' attention.

The question of how long a family generally served within the senatorial nucleus cannot be answered easily. Some of the families which flourished in the third century claimed descent from Republican *gentes*, like the Acilii Glabrones et Aviolae and the Valerii Messalae. As noted above, however, by far the largest group obtained consular status during the reigns of Marcus Aurelius or Septimius Severus. At the end of the Severan dynasty or perhaps somewhat later, about mid-third century, almost half of the analyzed *gentes* disappeared from the consular *fasti*. Consequently members of those families were no longer qualified to carry out consular top positions. It were not only those families which descended from supporters of Marcus Aurelius and Septimius Severus which disappeared (temporarily) from the senatorial elite after the Severan dynasty had stopped providing emperors. Surely, some of the 'Antonine' and 'Severan' *gentes* lost their position in the senatorial nucleus when Severan dynasty ended, such as for instance the Claudii Pompeiani, the Claudii Severi and the Marii. Yet the positions of other *gentes* which had obtained consular status well before the second half of the second century AD, such as the Acilii and the Bruttii, also seem to have (temporarily) declined.⁷⁵ Although it must be noted that (temporary) absence from the sources does not necessarily imply social decline, the phenomenon that some families became entirely imperceptible after about 250 indicates that they opted out of politics—either voluntary or involuntary—, especially when members of those families did not reappear in consular positions in the fourth century. In that case, a *gens* may have continued to be a senatorial family, but should clearly no longer be regarded as belonging to the central senatorial elite, let alone the senatorial nucleus.

At the risk of stating the obvious, I would like to stress once more that the senatorial nucleus defined and discussed in this section must have consisted of more *gentes* than the eighteen which were included in my analysis. Inevitably, my criteria have obscured some families from view. However, the intention of this analysis is not to paint a complete picture of the senatorial nucleus, but to check the level of continuity in the relationship between status and power by looking at some manifestations thereof and finding where continuities lie.

⁷⁵ Although it must be admitted that the Acilii seem to have had a revival from the fifth century onwards.

Senators and Statistics

The senatorial elite of the first three centuries AD has been analyzed by Hopkins and Burton in 1983.⁷⁶ Based on their intergenerational analysis of senatorial membership and holders of the consulate they rejected both the traditional view that membership of the senate was hereditary and Alföldy's notion of a *de facto* inheritable consulate under the Antonines.⁷⁷ Their statistical analysis and its conclusions were heavily criticized, particularly by Hahn and Leunissen, who have argued that 'numbers and statistics provide no ready answers to historical questions' as they 'depend upon judicious interpretation'.⁷⁸ I agree with them that the conclusions of Hopkins and Burton do not follow from a merely statistical analysis of sample studies and that a supplementary study of individual cases is essential.⁷⁹ Even though this chapter started from a different research question, Hopkins' and Burton's study of inheritance raises important questions for this study; therefore I find it valuable to discuss briefly how the outcome of my prosopographical analysis relates to their results.

Two basic inferences shared by both Hopkins' and Burton's analysis and mine are, first, the distinction between membership in the senatorial order and full active membership in the senate, which involved holding senatorial office, as well as, second, the identification of an elite within the senate consisting of members of consular rank. I have argued one step further in recognizing a nucleus of several families which dominated the senatorial elite, as they provided a substantial share of a number of high consular positions in the third century.⁸⁰ Hopkins and Burton also identified a two-tier system within the senatorial elite, but they distinguished between a small inner-core of ordinary consuls, most of whom had consular origins, and a larger, outer band of suffect consuls, many from non-consular families. From that, they furthermore distinguished a 'grand set' and a 'power set'. Their 'grand set', comprising the patrician and other most noble senators, often sons of consuls, was kept away from

⁷⁶ Hopkins and Burton in Hopkins (1983), 120–200.

⁷⁷ Hopkins and Burton in Hopkins (1983), 126–127, contra Alföldy (1976), 288–289, and id. (1977), 84–94.

⁷⁸ Hahn and Leunissen (1990), 77. Cf. Duncan-Jones (1984) with some critical notes. See also Burton's response to Hahn and Leunissen: Burton (1995).

⁷⁹ Cf. Duncan-Jones (1984), 273, who also criticizes the absence of a summary of the base data in Hopkins' and Burton's study.

⁸⁰ Cf. Hahn and Leunissen (1990), who argue that the 'consular aristocracy was such a multifarious and illustrious social grouping', that it is questionable whether they can 'all be painted in exact mathematical strokes'.

military power. According to Hopkins and Burton, some of the senators belonging to this set probably comforted themselves with social influence and with an extravagant social life in Rome, which both expressed and enhanced their status. Their 'power set', on the other hand, consisted of senators who governed the major military provinces and men who served the emperors as commanders of legions. Only a few of them had consular or even senatorial fathers: most of them came from families new to the political elite, and most descended from rich and respectable Italian or provincial gentry. A small minority consisted of social climbers, who made their way up from a less respectable social milieu, usually through military service.⁸¹ As my prosopographical analysis has demonstrated, both their distinction between a group of ordinary and one of suffect consuls and their division between a grand (status) set and a power set tend to oversimplify matters, at least where the third century is concerned.

Hopkins and Burton also recognize considerable persistence by some senatorial elite families over several generations under the emperors. Likewise, they acknowledge that the senatorial elite living in Rome was small and that most members must have known each other. Their analysis, however, only focuses on paternal descent, and with that they lose track of alternative interrelations within the senatorial nucleus. That is why they did not recognize that a part of the senatorial elite apparently did band together effectively to minimize the risks to their individual and especially their collective status.⁸²

Just as the senatorial elite during the Principate was not as weak as Hopkins and Burton present them, so also the distinction between a 'grand set' and a 'power set' within the senatorial elite ceases to exist in the course of the third century, especially from about 240 onward, when senators were apparently largely replaced as military commanders and governors of militarily relevant (frontier) provinces by *equites*. Furthermore, the relative power exercised by members of the senatorial nucleus in areas such as Italy, Africa and Asia should not be underestimated: the absence of large numbers of military men of relatively high social standing in those regions and the decreasing presence of emperors and imperial relatives in those areas in the third century must have improved their capacity to influence local politics.⁸³ Referring to them as a 'grand set', a

⁸¹ On the 'grand set' and 'power set', see Hopkins and Burton in Hopkins (1983), 172–173.

⁸² *Pace* Hopkins and Burton in Hopkins (1983), 175.

⁸³ Mitchell (1993) has demonstrated that military presence in Asia Minor increased in

mere status set, as Hopkins and Burton did, does not seem therefore to correspond to third-century historical reality. Moreover, what they had to give up in the military sphere of authority, they probably gained in the civil-administrative, legal and financial spheres, as the evidence points at an increasing number of *curatores*, *correctores*, *iudices* and *iuridici*— that is, *ad hoc* appointments for which members of the senatorial elite were extremely suitable. Thus it was not only the formal status of the senatorial elite which remained high, for their collective power did not decline as dramatically as has often been argued either.

As to circulation in the senatorial elite: my analysis has shown that opportunities to penetrate the senatorial nucleus evidently increased in periods in which senatorial mortality heightened, such as the reigns of Marcus Aurelius and Septimius Severus. Hopkins' and Burton's additional suggestion of political withdrawal as another catalyst of circulation within the senatorial elite may be true, but cannot be confirmed by individual case studies: the reason why families (temporarily) ceased to be part of the senatorial elite can rarely be recovered. Although Hopkins and Burton detected a remarkable drop in succession rates in the senatorial elite in the first three centuries AD, they have argued that succession rates were significantly higher among high-ranking senators. This assumption seems to be affirmed by my analysis. Whereas the number of provincials within the senatorial order was steadily rising from the later first century onward, and the percentage of members of the senate with provincial origins grew, provincials did not penetrate the senatorial nucleus on a large scale, or, if they did, their attachment to Italy and Rome apparently came to overshadow that of their provincial *patria*. Based on the notion that provincial newcomers kept the bulk of their property outside Italy and saw their expenses increase immensely while they lived in Rome and participated in political life, Hopkins and Burton argued that many of those men probably preferred to return to their *patria* after having completed the senatorial *cursus honorum*: at home, they could derive more power from their senatorial status than in Rome, while an Augustan law kept some privileges associated with senatorial status for sons of senators and

the third century AD. This military personnel (e.g. *beneficarii* at their *stationes*), however, was not of high social standing and does not seem to have dominated the province. As in other parts of the Empire, they probably concentrated their dwellings, and therefore their influence, mainly around cross roads and imperial property. Furthermore, it should be kept in mind that in Italy senators had always been extremely powerful at the local level. One of many examples is Plinius minor, who owned large properties and was a notable benefactor in his birthplace Comum (mod. Como).

their descendants in the male line down to the great-grandson. Large-scale 'political withdrawal' after one generation may explain why provincials hardly penetrated the senatorial nucleus.⁸⁴ Yet, as this conclusion cannot be drawn from Hopkins' and Burton's analysis or mine, it remains an *argumentum ex silentio*.⁸⁵ The position of the senatorial nucleus, however, was apparently not weakened by rising provincials.

The Roman senate in the third century AD may not have been a hereditary status group.⁸⁶ Yet, as my analysis has shown, membership in the *senatorial nucleus* seems to have been more or less hereditary, since members entered into strategic alliances with each other to increase their chances to remain in this senatorial inner core. Moreover, this group's level of power in specific geographic areas and spheres of authority should not be underrated.

2.4. Conclusion

This chapter discussed continuity within the senatorial elite. Beginning with a number of consular positions within central imperial administration, which were principally assigned to senators both before and after the period under discussion and in which senatorial power manifested itself most clearly, I have inventoried a substantial proportion of the senatorial elite which served the emperors at the level of central administration between AD 193 and 284. These lists enabled me to mark out eighteen *gentes* which apparently dominated the senatorial elite in the period under scrutiny: these *gentes* provided a substantial percentage of the (ordinary) consuls, proconsuls in Africa and Asia, and city prefects in Rome. A detailed prosopographical analysis has shown similarities in the profiles of these families which collectively constituted (part of) a nucleus within the central senatorial elite, as they were able to maintain or even improve their positions during the period of crises. All families in this senatorial inner circle were strongly attached to Italy, and a considerable proportion of them had or reached patrician status at some point in the third century.

⁸⁴ Hopkins and Burton in Hopkins (1983), 196.

⁸⁵ Hahn and Leunissen (1990), 79–80, consider it unlikely that particularly the sons of consuls who came from provincial families will have withdrawn from political life as they were expected to build up and use their political connections in Rome in the service of their *patriae* as *patroni*.

⁸⁶ Hopkins and Burton in Hopkins (1983), 136.

The existence of a senatorial (patrician) nucleus was not a novelty. Previous studies have established similar situations in the first and second centuries AD.⁸⁷ Yet a gradual shift in power aspects, as defined by Dahl, occurs: in the course of the third century the senatorial elite by degrees lost its influence in the military sphere to *equites*. Their scope of power was thus increasingly restricted to civil-administrative, legal and financial positions. The domain in which they exercised power was also limited: they were assigned increasingly to geographical regions which not only experienced few long-term problems such as repeated invasions and enduring warfare, but also kept a traditionally high status within the Empire, for example the provinces of Africa and Asia. Moreover, they were also appointed to functions in Rome and Italy. From the 240s onwards, members of this senatorial nucleus were rarely appointed in provinces occupied by legions. However, the amount of power they exercised inside their assigned areas should not be underestimated: that the emperors sojourned in Rome less frequently than ever before, and focused less attention on relatively peaceful areas such as Africa and Asia, especially after the Severan era, enabled this group to strengthen its position and exercise quite some influence there. Besides, no cabals of military men existed in those regions to compete with the senatorial elite in status and dominate in claiming power. So despite the territorial restriction, the level of control of the senatorial nucleus over those areas not only remained consistent, but it probably even grew.

Although the power of this group was decreasingly founded on actual military power, their other power bases remained intact: their traditionally high social standing, their compactness in size and consequent cohesiveness, and their bonds to Rome and Italy. This group obviously was aware of the advantages of belonging to the senatorial elite in general and the inner circle in particular, as they strove for continuation of their membership by strategically entering into alliances with other senatorial elite families. Senatorial elites were as always very well qualified to govern the relatively peaceful parts of the Empire, which were rich and developed, as they not only remained men of noble birth, but also well-educated and wealthy men. This made them acceptable to local

⁸⁷ See for instance Eck (1970) and Alföldy (1977). Obviously, having analyzed families which belonged to the senatorial nucleus between AD 193 and 284, the contrast between the first and second centuries and the third century has remained underexposed. However, the aim here was to reconstruct the process of shifts in power and status *within* the third century. A comparison with previous centuries was beyond the scope of this research.

elites in the areas which were continually assigned to them. Again, the only change in their status profile was their decreasing military role. By continually appointing those senators at such prestigious top positions, emperors gave them the honors due to them without giving them too much actual (i.e. military) power. In the earlier Principate, emperors had acted likewise towards the patrician nucleus of the senatorial order, and both the emperors as well as the members of elite senatorial families seemed to agree with this policy. The latter maintained their social status without taking too much risk, and the emperors were probably glad that certain mechanisms of the old system did not call for change but continued to function as they had done before. Keeping the senatorial elite families satisfied in this way would also legitimate their position all the more. Yet, as has been noted in Chapter 1, communication of the senators with the third-century emperors became increasingly complicated as the changing background and priorities of the emperors caused that they were no longer on a par with the senatorial elite.

In sum, the events of the third century did not transform Roman society completely: prestigious senatorial top positions remained in the hands of (a nucleus of) the central senatorial elite as before, and were not (permanently) transferred to *equites*. As always, the possibilities to penetrate this senatorial core group or even to become a member of the senatorial elite were restricted and they do not seem to have been eased by the increasing prospects for social mobility from the second century onwards. Senators who did not belong to the senatorial elite or its inner circle were obviously affected more severely by the crises of the third century, as has been discussed by many scholars. Here, I have sought to demonstrate that along with changes, there was also a certain level of continuity, although chiefly for a restricted group of the senatorial order. However, the gradual disappearance of the coincidence of high social status and the ability to exercise power in the Roman Empire in the third century is undeniable, as will become clear from the next chapter as well.

EXCURSUS

PROSOPOGRAPHY OF THE SENATORIAL ELITE FAMILIES

The following pages discuss the senatorial elite families in detail. Their background, position before, during, and after the period AD 193 to 284, as well as relations with senators inside and outside their *gens*, are described both schematically and in a narrative account. The *gens Caesonia* is only described schematically here. Information on careers and relations is generally derived from *PIR* and *PLRE*, in which references to the primary sources can be found. Where other scholarly works supplement or correct *PIR* and *PLRE*, this is stated in footnotes.

Table E1. The Acilii (Glabriones et Aviolae)¹

	M. Acilius Faustinus (<i>PIR</i> ² A 57)
Cursus honorum	– <i>Consul ordinarius</i> 210 with A. Triarius Rufinus
Notes	– Son of M. Acilius Glabrio, <i>consul II ordinarius</i> 186 (<i>PIR</i> ² A 69). – Perhaps brother of Acilius Glabrio, <i>clarissimus vir</i> (<i>Dig.</i> 4, 4, 18, 1). ² – Probably brother-in-law of Ti. Claudius Cleobulus, <i>consul suffectus</i> early 3rd century. ³ – Perhaps father of M. Acilius Glabrio, <i>consul ordinarius</i> 256. ⁴

¹ It cannot be determined with certainty whether the Acilii should be divided into two separate branches, the Aviolae and the Glabriones, or whether the Acilii were one branch using two *cognomina* simultaneously in the third century. On this problem, see Settapani (2000–2002), addenda I, 14–15. On the Acilii Glabriones, see also Dondin-Payre (1993); Jacques (1986), 152–155. See *PIR*², pars I (1933), 12, for a *stemma Glabrium* and, more recently, Settapani (2000), 198.

² *Digesta* 4, 4, 18, 1: (*Acilius Glabrio*) *quem Severus et Antoninus non audierunt desiderantem restitui adversus fratrem*. ('Indeed, the deified Severus and the emperor Antoninus did not hear Glabrio Acilius when, without alleging a reason, he sought *restitutio* against his brother after they had heard and determined his case' (trans. Watson)).

³ Claudius Cleobulus was married to Acilia Frestana, who seems to have been Faustinus' sister. Settapani (2000), 189–191; Leunissen (1989), 191; Jacques (1986), 152. On the Claudii (Cleobuli), see Jacques (1986), 173.

⁴ Leunissen (1989), 372.

- Probably father-in-law of Claudius Acilius Cleobulus, who seems to have been his nephew.⁵
 - Perhaps uncle of M'. Acilius Aviola, *consul ordinarius* 239.⁶
- M'. Acilius Aviola** (*PIR*² A 51)
- Cursus honorum** – *Consul ordinarius* 239 with Gordianus III
- Notes** – Perhaps nephew of M'. Acilius Faustinus, *consul ordinarius* 210.
- M(?). Acilius Glabrio**⁷ (*PIR*² A 72)
- Cursus honorum** – *Consul ordinarius* 256 with L. Valerius Maximus (*consul II*)
- *Proconsul Africae*?? 3rd century?⁸
- Notes** – Descendant (son?) of M'. Acilius Faustinus, *consul ordinarius* 210.

The patrician family of the Acilii, which was probably Italic and claimed descent from Aeneas, was politically engaged since the Republican period.⁹ The first Acilius whose consulship can be dated precisely was Gaius Calpurnius Acilius Aviola in AD 24. Members of the *gens Acilia* regularly held consulates during the first and second centuries AD.¹⁰

⁵ *CIL* 09.2334 = *ILS* 1134 (Allifae, Italy) mentions Acilia Gabinia Frestana, daughter of Claudius Acilius Cleobulus and granddaughter of Acilius Faustinus. Cleobulus thus seems to have been married to a daughter of Acilius Faustinus. Settapani (2000), 189–190. Settapani suggests that the name Gabinia came from the girl's grandmother (Faustinus' wife) and adds that she was probably the daughter of C. Gabinius Barbarus Pompeianus, *consul suffectus* 194 and *proconsul Asiae* 212. This assumption, however, seems to lack evidential support and to be based on nomenclature only.

⁶ According to Settapani (2000), 173 and 198.

⁷ Christol (1986), 99, points out that his *praenomen* appears on the inscription from Pisaurum (*CIL* 11.6335 = *ILS* 7218) as Marcus (M). However, one would expect Manius (M'), since he is probably a descendant of M'. Acilius Glabrio, *consul II ordinarius* 186, and M'. Acilius Faustinus, *consul ordinarius* 210.

⁸ An Acilius Glabrio was governor of Africa, but the date of his appointment is disputable; it may alternatively have been in the second century AD. Thomasson (1996), 94, no. 132.

⁹ On their Italic origin, see Dietz (1980), 352, who points out that the Acilii had properties in Allifae and Ostia. On the claim that the Acilii descended from Aeneas, see Herodianus, 2, 3, 3–4. According to Jacques (1986), 152, the Acilii entered the senate late third century BC and became patrician in the first century AD.

¹⁰ M'. Acilius Aviola, *consul ordinarius* 54; M'. Acilius Glabrio, *consul ordinarius* 91; M'. Acilius Aviola, *consul ordinarius* 122; M'. Acilius Glabrio, *consul ordinarius* 124; M'. Acilius Glabrio Cn. Cornelius Severus, *consul ordinarius* 152; M'. Acilius Vibius Faustinus, *consul suffectus* 179; M'. Acilius Glabrio, *consul suffectus* circa 173, *consul II ordinarius* 186. See Settapani (2000), 198.

Three Acilii held the position of consul between AD 193 and 284, all as *ordinarii*. Acilius Faustinus was consul in 210, and is generally assumed to have been the son of Acilius Glabrio (*PIR*² A 69), *consul II ordinarius* in 186, who was highly honored in the senate by emperor Pertinax.¹¹ Faustinus may have been the uncle of Acilius Aviola, consul in 239. Acilius Glabrio, consul in 256, may have been Faustinus' son. Yet, the interval of forty-six years between their consulates is quite long, especially within a patrician family whose members usually held consulates at a young age.

Aulus Triarius Rufinus, colleague of Acilius Faustinus in 210, was the son of Triarius Maternus *signo* Lascivius, *consul ordinarius* in 185. Acilius Glabrio's colleague in 256 was Lucius Valerius Maximus, representative of one of the other senatorial elite families of the third century, the Valerii (Messallae) (see below). Valerius Maximus' full name, Lucius Valerius Claudius Acilius Priscilianus Maximus, indicates that there may have been a connection between him and the Acilii.¹² Acilius Aviola had an even more impressive colleague in 239: the emperor Gordianus III, who held his first consulship. As Dietz points out, the fact that Acilius Aviola was designated consul in the course of 238, probably not long after Pupienus and Balbinus were killed, reveals that the influence of the high aristocracy did not decrease immediately after the deaths of these emperors.¹³

From 256 to 284, there are very few indications that members of this family held consulates, proconsulates or the city prefecture: M'. Acilius Balbus Sabinus, who seems to have been connected to the *gens*, was probably *consul suffectus* under Diocletian, after 284. The same goes for Acilius Clarus. During the fourth century, no member of this family seems to have reached consular rank. The next consular Anicius seems

¹¹ Dio 74, 3, 3–4, mentions that Pertinax granted Acilius Glabrio (along with Claudius Pompeianus) the privilege to sit beside him in the senate, which was an exceptional honor. Herodianus 2, 3, 3–4, even states that Pertinax offered the imperial throne to Glabrio. Although the event was probably invented, it does reflect the high status of the *gens Acilia* in Herodianus' day. See also Champlin (1979), 289; 291–297, who states (295–296): '... in the early years of the sole rule of Commodus [...] Acilius Glabrio stood very close to the throne, both as counsellor and potential heir. In 193 he would stand with Claudius Pompeianus as the guardian of the dynasty and of legitimacy.'

¹² Settapani (2000), 227–228, offers two hypotheses. First, that Valerius Maximus' father married a sister of M'. Acilius Faustinus, *consul ordinarius* 210. The other is that Valerius Maximus was a grandson of Ti. Claudius Cleobulus, *consul suffectus* early 3rd century, and Acilia Frestana, sister of Faustinus, *consul ordinarius* 210.

¹³ Dietz (1980), 39. Acilius Aviola's consulate could also indicate that different factions existed among the high aristocracy and that his supported Gordianus III's against Pupienus and Balbinus.

to have been Anicius Acilius Glabrio Faustus (*PLRE* I, Faustus 2), only in AD 438. His consulship seems to have been the beginning of a true revival of the Acilii as consular senators. At the end of the fifth century the Acilii provided their last consuls.¹⁴

Table E2. The Anicii¹⁵

	Q. Anicius Faustus (<i>PIR</i>² A 595)
Cursus honorum	– <i>Legatus Aug(g?) pr pr Numidiae</i> 197–201 – <i>Consul suffectus (in absentia)</i> 198 – <i>Legatus Augg pr pr Moesiae Superioris</i> 202?–205? – <i>Proconsul Asiae</i> 217–219 ¹⁶
Notes	– Probably father of Anicius Faustus Paulinus, <i>consul suffectus</i> before 230. ¹⁷
	(Q. or Sex.?) Anicius Faustus Paulinus (<i>PIR</i>² A 596 and 599)
Cursus honorum	– <i>Consul suffectus</i> before 230 – <i>Legatus Aug pr pr Moesiae Inferioris</i> ca. 229/230
Notes	– Probably son of Q. Anicius Faustus, <i>consul suffectus</i> 198. – Married to a daughter of Sex. Cocceius Vibianus (<i>PIR</i> ² C 1232), <i>consul suffectus</i> late 2nd/early 3rd century, <i>proconsul Africae</i> early 3rd century, or brother-in-law of a son of this Cocceius Vibianus. ¹⁸

¹⁴ Settapani (2000–2002), add. I, 15–16, assumes that M. Acilius Balbus Sabinus held a suffect consulship under Diocletian, based on the fact that he was *curator alvei Tiberei* circa 286/305. According to Jacques (1986), 153, an Acilius Clarus, *vir consularis, praeses Numidiae* (*PLRE* I, Clarus 2), may have been related to the *gens* as well. He has been identified with an Acilius Clarus, who was *corrector Italiae* in 286. Jacques, however, follows Arnheim and Christol, who suggest that the *corrector* was the father of the *praeses* of Numidia, whose position as *praeses* should then be dated somewhat later, circa 312–320. Yet, it cannot be determined that an Acilius Clarus held a consulate before 284. Neither can it be determined whether Acilius Severus, consul in 323, *praefectus urbi* 325–326 (*PLRE* I, Severus 16), belonged to the same branch of Acilii or to a separate branch from Brixia. On this matter, see Jacques (1986), 154 no. 28, 155, and 99 where he speaks of a ‘relativo offuscamento (relative obscurity)’ of the *gens* in the fourth century. The other fifth-century consuls from the *gens Acilia* were Rufius Acilius Maecius Placidus, *consul ordinarius* 481; Anicius Acilius Aginantius Faustus, *consul ordinarius* 483; Rufius Acilius Sibidius, *consul ordinarius* 488. See Settapani (2000), 198.

¹⁵ See Corbier (1982), 741, for a stemma of the third-century Anicii. Alternative stemmata can be found in Settapani (2000), 348 and 432. *PLRE* I, 1133, stemma 7, lays out the Anicii from the mid-third century onward.

¹⁶ The dates of the positions mentioned here are based on Leunissen (1989), *passim*.

¹⁷ Leunissen (1989), 373.

¹⁸ Corbier (1982), 741, followed by Leunissen (1989), 166, note 165, thinks Paulinus married a daughter of Cocceius Vibianus. Settapani (2000), 348, on the other hand, thinks

- Father (or uncle?) of M. Cocceius Anicius Faustus Flavianus, *consul suffectus* circa 250/252, and of Sex. Cocceius Anicius Faustus Paulinus, *consul suffectus* before 260/268.

**M. Cocceius Anicius Faustus Flavianus (PIR²
A 597/PLRE I, Flavianus 8)**

Cursus honorum

- *Curator rei publicae Cirtae* 251
- *Consul suffectus* ca. 250/2

Notes

- Probably son (or nephew?) of Anicius Faustus Paulinus, *consul suffectus* before 230, and brother of Sex. Cocceius Anicius Faustus Paulinus, *consul* before 260/8.¹⁹
- Patricius.

**Sex. Cocceius Anicius Faustus Paulinus (PIR²
A 600/PLRE I, Paulinus 16)**

Cursus honorum

- *Consul suffectus* before 260/8
- *Proconsul Africae* ca. 265/8²⁰

Notes

- Probably son (or nephew?) of Anicius Faustus Paulinus, *consul suffectus* before 230, and brother of M. Cocceius Anicius Faustus Flavianus, *consul suffectus* ca. 250/2.
- Ancestor (father?) of Anicius Faustus (PLRE I, Faustus 6), *consul II ordinarius* 298 with Virius Gallus, *praefectus urbi* 299–300, and of Paulinus (PLRE I, Paulinus 2), *consul ordinarius* 277 with Probus (see above).²¹
- Claudia Sestia Cocceia Severina (PIR² C 1123), wife of Q. Hedius Lollianus Plautius Avitus, *consul ordinarius* 209, may have been a relative.²²
- At the end of the 3rd or the beginning of the 4th century, the Anicii seem to have become connected to the Caesonii.²³

that a daughter of Anicius Faustus, *consul suffectus* 198, married a son of Sex. Cocceius Vibianus, and that Faustus' sons included M. Cocceius Anicius Faustus Flavianus, *consul suffectus* circa 250/252, and Cocceius Anicius Faustus Paulinus, *consul* before 260/268. For the moment, the exact lineage remains unclear.

¹⁹ Novak (1976), 26; 56; Corbier (1982), 741.

²⁰ According to Thomasson (1996), 92–93, although he admits that the appointment may also have taken place between 276 and 285 under Probus, Carinus or Carinus' sons.

²¹ Christol (1986), 115 suggested that Cocceius Anicius Faustus Paulinus may have been their father. Cf. Settapani (2000), 347, note 8; 432.

²² According to PLRE I, Paulinus 16, 681. See also Settapani (2000), 406–407.

²³ This assumption is based on the names of M. Iunius Caesonius Nicomachus Anicius Faustus Paulinus, *praetor urbanus* 321, and of Amnius Manius Caesonius Nicomachus Anicius Paulinus, *consul* 334, *praefectus urbi* 334–335. The fact that some Anicii in the

The Anicii appear in the sources in the second century AD. Their geographical origin has been disputed. Some scholars consider them to have been notables from the African city Uzappa, while others think they originated from Praeneste in Italy.²⁴

Anicius Faustus was the first member of the *gens Anicia* to become consul (*suffectus*) at the end of the second century. He may have been a *homo novus*.²⁵ Anicius Faustus held his consulship *in absentia* while he was governor of Numidia, after which he became consular governor of Moesia Superior. This was the last position he held under Septimius Severus. For unknown reasons, the emperor refused to let him participate in the raffle for the governorships of the proconsular provinces. It was not until the reign of Macrinus that Anicius Faustus finally became governor of Asia, replacing Gaius Iulius Asper, who was recalled by Macrinus before he had even reached the province.²⁶

An inscription which can be dated to AD 230 mentions Anicius Faustus Paulinus, probably the son of Anicius Faustus, as governor of Moesia Inferior.²⁷ Since this was a consular position, it may be assumed that this man was *consul suffectus* prior to his governorship. Cocceius Anicius Faustus Flavianus, *consul suffectus* circa 250/2, and Cocceius Anicius Faustus Paulinus, *proconsul Africae* somewhere between 260 and 268, belong to the next generation of this family, a generation which somehow descended from the Cocceii. By that time, the family, which descended from a *vir militaris*, had reached patrician status.²⁸ They are the last consular Anicii who can be assigned to the period under discussion with certainty.

fourth and fifth century bore the *cognomen* Bassus indicates that they may have been descendants of L. Caesonius Ovinus Manlius Rufinianus Bassus and his son Caesonius Bassus, *consul* 317. See Settapani (2000), 348 for a stemma, and 347, note 8 for an alternative suggested by Chausson.

²⁴ On their origin, see Corbier (1982), 740, and Leunissen (1989), 365.

²⁵ Jacques (1986), 158.

²⁶ Dio 79, 22, 2–4. Novak (1976), 40–41, suggests that Faustus was a protégé of Plautianus and that this caused the lapse from favor after 205 and during the reign of Caracalla. Novak considers it significant that Faustus re-emerged under Macrinus, an underling of Plautianus. Novak (1976), 37–38: ‘Macrinus allowed him to continue in office the following year, thereby displacing Aufidius Fronto, a descendant (son) of an honored Antonine general. Surely, Macrinus’ offer of the salary instead of the post to Fronto should be construed as an insult. The *novus homo* Faustus in his place only intensified the sting.’

²⁷ *CIL* 3.7473 (Moesia Inferior).

²⁸ M. Cocceius Anicius Faustus Flavianus is called *patricius* in *CIL* 08, 07040 = *AE* 1946, 61 = *ILAlg* 02, 01, 00625 (Numidia). Novak (1976), 55–56, suggests that this may

Two other consulates are doubtful. An Anicius Faustus was *consul iterum* in 298. It is not unlikely that he held his first consulship before 284, since an interval of circa twenty years between the first and second consulship was quite common. Furthermore, it has been suggested that Paulinus, *consul ordinarius* in 277 with the emperor Probus, belonged to the *gens Anicia* as well, and that he may have been the brother of the consul of 298. The Anicii continued to be an important consular family during the fourth century, and traceable even afterwards are consuls bearing this *nomen*.²⁹

At the end of the third or beginning of the fourth century, the Anicii established relations with the Caesonii. They may have had relations with the Hedii as well.³⁰

Table E3. The Bruttii³¹

	C. Bruttius Praesens (PIR² B 166)
<i>Cursus honorum</i>	– <i>Consul ordinarius</i> 217 with T. Messius Extricatus
<i>Notes</i>	– Grandson of C. Bruttius Praesens (PIR ² B 165), <i>consul II ordinarius</i> 180, <i>comes</i> of Marcus Aurelius and Commodus in the <i>expeditio Sarmatica</i> 173–175 and father-in-law of Commodus.
	– Son of L. Bruttius Quintius Crispinus (PIR ² B 169), <i>consul ordinarius</i> 187.
	– Nephew of Crispina Augusta, Commodus' wife.
	– Brother of C. Bruttius Crispinus, <i>consul ordinarius</i> 224.
	– Probably father of C. Bruttius Praesens, <i>consul ordinarius</i> 246.
	C. (or L.?) Bruttius Crispinus (PIR² B 160)
<i>Cursus honorum</i>	– <i>Consul ordinarius</i> 224 with App. Claudius Iulianus
<i>Notes</i>	– Son of L. Bruttius Quintius Crispinus, <i>consul ordinarius</i> 187.
	– Brother of C. Bruttius Praesens, <i>consul ordinarius</i> 217.
	C. Bruttius Praesens (PIR² B 167)
<i>Cursus honorum</i>	– <i>Consul ordinarius</i> 246 with C. Al[lius] Albinus

have happened during the reign of Decius. Jacques (1986), 122–123, suggests that they obtained patrician status circa 230.

²⁹ On Anicius Faustus, *consul II* 298, and Paulinus, *consul ordinarius* with Probus 277, see Christol (1986), 114–115; Kreucher (2003), 199; Settiani (2000), 346–348. On the Anicii after the third century, see Jacques (1986), 158–159; Settiani (2000), 432.

³⁰ *PLRE I*, Paulinus 16; Settiani (2000), 406–407.

³¹ On the Bruttii, see Arnheim (1972), 139–141; Settiani (2000), 340–341 with a stemma.

Notes

- Probably son of C. Bruttius Praesens, *consul ordinarius* 217.
- Probably grandfather of Bruttius Praesens (*PIR*² B 163/*PLRE* I, Praesens), *vir clarissimus* late 3rd/early 4th century.

The Bruttii, a family from Volcei (Lucania, Italy), can be traced back to the first century AD, but the first consular member of this *gens* was Bruttius Praesens (*PIR*² B 164) in the second century. He presumably was the son of an *amicus* of Plinius and he became *consul suffectus* under Hadrianus and again as colleague of Antoninus Pius in 139. His son Bruttius Praesens (*PIR*² B 165) also held two consulships: in 153 and 180. As *comes* of Marcus Aurelius and Commodus during the *expeditio Sarmatica* he took part in the Marcomannic wars. This Bruttius Praesens was the father of Bruttius Quintius Crispinus (*PIR*² B 169), *consul ordinarius* in 187, and of Bruttia Crispina, who married Commodus in 178. According to Jacques, the *gens* had reached patrician status by that time.³²

During the reign of Septimius Severus, no Bruttius is known to have been consul. Strengthening the ties with a family so closely connected with the Antonines would have fit into Severus' dynastic representation policy at the beginning of his reign.³³ However, Crispina was accused of adultery and exiled to Capri by Commodus, which may explain the absence of the Bruttii in the consular *fasti* during Severus' reign. Whatever the reason for the absence of the Bruttii was, it was only temporary; three more Bruttii became *consul ordinarius* during the third century. First came Bruttius Quintius Crispinus' sons Bruttius Praesens in 217 and Bruttius Crispinus in 224. Bruttius Praesens' colleague in 217 was Titus Messius Extricatus (*PIR*² P 518), who started his career as *eques*.³⁴ Bruttius Crispinus' colleague in 224 was Appius Claudius Iulianus, who was *consul iterum* and who had probably been governor of Africa during the reign of Elagabalus or—less likely—Caracalla. Bruttius Praesens

³² On the geographic origins of the Bruttii, see Leunissen (1989), 359; Jacques (1986), 99; Salway (2000), 147, note 161. Plinius addressed *Epistula* 7, 3 to a (Bruttius) Praesens (*PIR*² B 161). This man was probably the father of Bruttius Praesens, *consul II* in 139. According to Jacques (1986), 122–123 (cf. 165–166), the *gens* became patrician under Antoninus Pius.

³³ Mennen (2005), 254–257.

³⁴ From *AE* 1977, 171 (Portus, Italy) we know that he was *praefectus annonae*. Apparently, he was enrolled in the senate afterwards. Salway (1997), 127–153, rejects the usually accepted notion of Cébeillac-Gervasoni (1979) that ... atus from *CIL* 6.31776a-6 = *ILS* 1329; *CIL* 6.31875 (Roma) is to be identified with T. Messius Extricatus.

was the last member of the *gens Bruttia* who held a consulate in 246 with Gaius Al[lius] Albinus, whose origin and further career remain unclear. Besides the consulships, no other positions held by these three Bruttii are known to us.

The fact that the third-century Bruttii all served as *ordinarii* indicates that their high status, which probably resulted mainly from their second-century connection with the Antonines, continued until at least the mid-third century. A *vir clarissimus* Br(u)ttius Praesens (*PIR*² B 163/*PLRE* I, Praesens) mentioned in two inscriptions dated late third or early fourth century presumably descended from Bruttius Praesens, *consul ordinarius* 246.³⁵

Table E4. The Caesonii³⁶

	C. Caesonius Macer Rufinianus (<i>PIR</i>² C 210)
<i>Cursus honorum</i>	– <i>Triumvir capitalis</i>
	– <i>Tribunus militum legionis I Adiutricis</i> ?178 / 180
	– <i>Quaestor provinciae Narbonensis</i>
	– <i>Tribunus plebis</i>
	– <i>Legatus proconsulis Baeticae</i> ca. 185
	– <i>Praetor</i> ca. 187
	– <i>Legatus proconsulis Asiae</i>
	– <i>Curator r p Asculanorum</i>
	– <i>Legatus Aug legionis VII Claudiae</i> ca. 187 / 190
	– <i>Proconsul Achaiae</i> ca. 192
	– <i>Curator r p Tarracinensium</i> ca. 193
	– <i>Legatus Aug pr pr Lusitaniae</i> ?194-?197
	– <i>Consul suffectus</i> ca. 197 / 198
	– <i>Curator r p Teanensium</i> ca. 197
	– <i>Curator alvei Tiberis</i> ?198 / 200
	– <i>Legatus Aug pr pr Germaniae Superioris</i> ?200-?203
	– <i>Curator aquarum et Miniciae</i> ?203 / 213
	– <i>Proconsul Africae</i> ?213 / 215 or 218 / 222?
	– <i>Curator r p Lanivinatorum/Lavininorum II</i>
	– <i>Comes Aug</i> ?222 / 235, 231-233?

³⁵ According to *CIL* 6.2153 (Roma) and 10.468 (Leucosia, Italy), this man was *corrector Lucaniae et Brittiorum* and *pontifex maior*. Both inscriptions read 'Brittius'. It has been suggested in both *PIR*² B 163 and *PLRE* I, Praesens that this Br(u)ttius Praesens may have been the grandson of Bruttius Praesens, consul 246. Jacques (1986), 99, mentions that the family is still represented at the beginning of the fourth century 'pur senza riacquistare lo splendore precedente.'

³⁶ See *PLRE* I, 1137, stemma 11 for a family tree of the Caesonii from the mid-third century onward.

- Notes**
- Husband of Manilia Lucilla, the sister or daughter of (Ti.) Manilius Fuscus, *consul suffectus* 196/7, *consul II ordinarius* 225.
 - Father of L. Caesonius Lucillus Macer Rufinianus, *consul suffectus* ?225/230.
- Cursus honorum**
- L. Caesonius Lucillus Macer Rufinianus (PIR² C 209)**
- *Decemvir stlitibus iudicandis*
 - *Quaestor candidatus* ca. 215/217 or ca. 212?
 - *Praetor candidatus* ca. 220/222, or ca. 217?
 - *Curator r p Suessanorum*
 - *Curator r p Tuscolanorum/Puteolanorum*
 - *Legatus Africae eodem tempore vice proconsulis* ?225/230
 - *Consul suffectus* ?225/230
 - *Curator alvei Tiberis et cloacarum urbis* ?225/230
 - *Curator aquarum et Miniciae* ?230/235
 - *XXvir ex s c r p curandae* 238
 - *Proconsul Africae* not before 240/241
 - *Electus ad cognoscendas vice Caesaris cognitionis* 241/254, 242–244?
 - *Praefectus urbi* 241/254, 246?
- Notes**
- Son of C. Caesonius Macer Rufinianus, *consul suffectus* ca. 197/198.
 - Probably husband of a woman belonging to the *gens Ovinia*.
 - Father of L. Caesonius Ovinus Manlius Rufinianus Bassus, *consul suffectus* ca. 260, *consul II suffectus* 284.
- Cursus honorum**
- L. Caesonius Ovinus Manlius Rufinianus Bassus (PIR² C 212; PIR² O 186; PLRE I, Bassus 18)**
- *Triumvir capitalis* after 235?, 240/245?
 - *Sevir turmae deducendae* after 235?, 240/245?
 - *Quaestor candidatus*
 - *Praetor candidatus*
 - *Curator r p Beneventanorum* before 260
 - *Consul suffectus* ca. 260
 - *Curator alvei Tiberis et cloacarum sacrae urbis*
 - *Legatus proconsulis Africae dioeceseos Carthaginensis* (praetorian?)
 - *Curator coloniae Carthaginensium* (praetorian?)
 - *Proconsul Africae tertium* ca. 275?
 - *Electus a divo Probo ad praesidendum iudicium magnum* ca. 276/282
 - *Iudex sacrarum cognitionum vice Caesaris sine appellatione cognoscens inter fiscum et privates item inter privates Roma* ca. 276/281
 - *Iudex et in provincia Africa* ca. 281/2

- Notes*
- *Comes Augg* spring/summer 283?–285
 - *Praefectus urbi* 295
 - *Pr[...]ones tracto Piceno*
 - Son of L. Caesonius Lucillus Macer Rufinianus, *consul suffectus* ?225 / 230.
 - Father or grandfather of Caesonius Bassus, *consul ordinarius* 317.
 - Connected to the Anicii.

A detailed diachronic summary of the political activities of the Caesonii with further references can be found in section 2.2.

Table E5. The Catii

- P. Catius Sabinus (PIR² C 571)**
- Cursus honorum*
- *Tribunus legionis XIII Geminae* in Dacia³⁷
 - *Praetor urbanus*
 - *Legatus Augg pr pr Norici* 206 / 9
 - *Consul suffectus* 208 / 10
 - *Curator aedium sacrarum operumque publicorum* 210
 - *Consul II ordinarius* 216 with P. Cornelius Anullinus (*consul II*)
- Notes*
- Perhaps identical with the Sabinus whom Elagabalus ordered to have killed (*HA, Vita Elag.* 16, 2–3).
 - Probably ancestor (father or grandfather?) of C. Catius Clemens, *consul suffectus* circa 235, and of L. Catius Celer, *consul suffectus* circa 241.
- [Catius? Lepi]dus I[–] (RE Suppl. 14, 88 s.v. Catius 9a)**
- Cursus honorum*
- *Consul suffectus* early 3rd century?
- Notes*
- May have been father of Sex. Catius Clementinus Priscillianus, *consul ordinarius* 230, and of Catius Clemens, *consul suffectus* circa 235.³⁸

³⁷ *AE* 1956, 204 = *AE* 2002, 01218 (Dacia).

³⁸ *AE* 1948, 241 (Dalmatia) attests that this man was consul, (probably) husband of Publicia Quarta, and father of Catia Maximina, C[lementina?], Clementinus, and Clemens. If this Clementinus and Clemens were identical with the *consul ordinarius* 230, and *consul suffectus* circa 235, this [Catius? Lepi]dus I[–] probably held his consulship about thirty years before theirs, circa AD 200. On this matter, see *RE Suppl.* 14, 88, s.v. Catius 9a, and Leunissen (1989), 158f. In my opinion, the possibility that this [Catius? Lepi]dus may have been identical with P. Catius Sabinus should not be excluded.

- Sex. Catius Clementinus Priscillianus** (*PIR*² C 564)
- Cursus honorum* – *Consul ordinarius* 230 with L. Virius Agricola
– *Legatus Aug pr pr Germaniae Superioris* 231
- Notes* – May have been a son of [Catius? Lepi]dus I[—], *consul suffectus* early 3rd century.
– May have been brother of Catius Clemens, *consul suffectus* circa 235.
– May have been brother of L. Catius Celer, *consul suffectus* circa 241.
- C. Catius Clemens** (*RE Suppl.* 14, 88 s.v. Catius 6b)
- Cursus honorum* – *Consul suffectus* before 238, ca. 235
– *Legatus Aug pr pr Cappadociae* ? 236/8³⁹
- Notes* – Probably descendant (son or grandson?) of P. Catius Sabinus, *consul II ordinarius* 216.
– May have been brother of Sex. Catius Clementinus Priscillianus, *consul ordinarius* 230.
– May have been brother of L. Catius Celer, *consul suffectus* circa 241.
- L. Catius Celer** (*PIR*² A 1350)⁴⁰
- Cursus honorum* – *Legatus Aug pr pr Thraciae* 238 / 241
– *Consul suffectus (in absentia)* ca. 241
– *Legatus Aug pr pr Moesiae Superioris* 242⁴¹
- Notes* – Probably descendant (son or grandson?) of P. Catius Sabinus, *consul II ordinarius* 216.
– Probably related to (brother) Sex. Catius Clementinus Priscillianus, *consul ordinarius* 230.
– May have been brother of C. Catius Clemens, *consul suffectus* before 238.

Although the evidence on the Catii is far from clear and scholars have not reached total agreement on their exact family ties, several members of the same branch seem to have held consular positions from the beginning of the third century until the reign of Gordianus III. It has been suggested that Catius Sabinus originated from northern-Italy or Gallia, although an inscription indicates that the Catii owned property in Dalmatia as

³⁹ *CIL* 3.6924 (Cappadocia). This position was either carried out by him or by his older brother Sex. Catius Clementinus Priscillianus. See Dietz (1980), 354. Eck (1985), 93, note 4, argues that it is more likely that Catius Clemens held it. See also Leunissen (1989), 199, note 308.

⁴⁰ His names used to be read erroneously as Q. Atius Celer. That is how he ended up in *pars I* of *PIR*². *AE* 1952, 191 (Moesia Superior), has shown that his name is Lucius Catius Celer. On this, see also *RE Suppl.* 14, 87, s.v. Catius 6.

⁴¹ See Dietz (190), 120–121.

well. According to Dietz, the third-century Catii descended from Cattius Severus, consul in the second century, and from Catius Marcellus, *consul suffectus* in 153. Jacques suggests that they may even descend from first-century senators.⁴²

The first member of the *gens* to hold a consulship between AD 193 and 284 was Catius Sabinus. He was suffect consul between 208 and 210. He held a second, ordinary, consulate in 216 with Publius Cornelius Anullinus as his colleague. This short interval may indicate that he was a close supporter of Caracalla. In addition to a position as *curator* between the consulships, no consular positions appear in our evidence for him.⁴³

Catius Clementinus Priscillianus was *consul ordinarius* in 230, before he held a governorship in Germania Superior. He was either Sabinus' son or the son of a [Catius? Lepi]dus I[—], who was *consularis* and whose name can be deduced from the names of his children, who set up an inscription in honor of him in Dalmatia.⁴⁴ If he was indeed the father of Clementinus and Catius Clemens, *consul suffectus* circa 235, this [Lepi]dus must have been *consul suffectus* about AD 200.

Catius Celer was *consul suffectus* probably under Gordianus III, perhaps during his governorship in Thracia. He held a consular governorship in Moesia Superior in 242. He seems to have been a descendant of Catius Sabinus and related to Clementinus and Clemens, and he was the last member of the *gens* known to us who held a consulate between 193 and 284.⁴⁵

Table E6. The Claudii Pompeiani⁴⁶

	L. Aurel(i)us Commodus Pompeianus (PIR² P 568)
Cursus honorum	– <i>Consul ordinarius</i> 209 with Q. (Hedius) Lollianus Plautius Avitus

⁴² On the origin of the Catii, see Alföldy (1968), 137–138. *AE* 1948, 241 (Dalmatia) points to landed property in that province. On Cattius Severus and Catius Marcellus as ancestors of the third-century Catii, see Dietz (1980), 121–122; 355, who claims that L. Catius Celer descended from these men. On a potential descent from first-century senators, see Jacques (1986), 99.

⁴³ Christol (1986), 31, note 62, suggests that the consul of 208/10 and the consul of 216 may have been two different individuals, who were father and son. For the suggestion that Sabinus was a loyal supporter of Caracalla, see *DNP*, vol. 2, s.v. Catius [II 6].

⁴⁴ *AE* 1948, 241 (Dalmatia).

⁴⁵ On potential descendants of the third-century Catii in the fourth century, see Jacques (1986), 170.

⁴⁶ For stemmata see *PIR² P 568*, pars 6, 248, no. 26; Dietz (1980), 374, stemma 3; and Settapani (2000), 302. See *id.*, 302, on the difficulties of establishing the relationships between the members of the *gens* and for further references.

- Notes**
- Son of Ti. Claudius Pompeianus (*PIR*² C 973), *consul II ordinarius* 173, or of Claudius Pompeianus Quintianus (*PIR*² C 975), *quaestorius* who died in 182/3 and was son-in-law of Lucilla Augusta.⁴⁷
 - May have been father of Claudius Pompeianus, *consul ordinarius* 231, and of L. Ti. Claudius Aurelius Quintianus (Pompeianus?), *consul ordinarius* 235.
 - Probably uncle of Clodius Pompeianus, *consul ordinarius* 241.
 - May have been the Pompeianus who was executed by Caracalla in 211/2.⁴⁸
- (Ti. Claudius) Pompeianus (*PIR*² P 567; 569)**
- Cursus honorum**
- *Consul suffectus* 212
- Notes**
- May have been son (or grandson?) of Ti. Claudius Pompeianus, *consul II ordinarius* 173.⁴⁹
- (Ti.) Claudius Pompeianus (*PIR*² C 972)**
- Cursus honorum**
- *Consul ordinarius* 231 with T. Flavius Sallustius Paelignianus
- Notes**
- Son of L. Aurel(l)ius Commodus Pompeianus, *consul ordinarius* 209, and/or grandson of (Ti. Claudius) Pompeianus, *consul suffectus* 212.⁵⁰
 - Related to (brother of?) L. Ti. Claudius Aurelius Quintianus (Pompeianus?), *consul ordinarius* 235.
 - Related to (brother or cousin of?) Clodius Pompeianus, *consul ordinarius* 241.
- L. Ti. Claudius Aurelius Quintianus (Pompeianus?) (*PIR*² C 992)**
- Cursus honorum**
- *Triumvir monetalis* 221/3
 - *Quaestor candidatus* 228
 - *Praetor* 233
 - *Consul ordinarius* 235 with Cn. Claudius Severus⁵¹
- Notes**
- Related to (son of?) L. Aurel(l)ius Commodus Pompeianus, *consul ordinarius* 209.
 - Related to (Ti. Claudius) Pompeianus, *consul suffectus* 212.⁵²

⁴⁷ On Commodus Pompeianus as the son of Ti. Claudius Pompeianus, general of Marcus Aurelius, see Leunissen (1989), 372. On him as the son of Claudius Pompeianus Quintianus, see *PIR*² P 568. See also Settiani (2000), 301–302.

⁴⁸ Herodianus 4, 6, 3; *HA, Vita Car.*, 3, 8; Leunissen (1989), 402. See also Dietz (1983), 389, with further references.

⁴⁹ Dietz (1983), 390.

⁵⁰ See stemma Settiani (2000), 302. Leunissen (1989), 374, assumes he was the son of Aurel(l)ius Commodus Pompeianus, *consul ordinarius* 209.

⁵¹ These dates are based on Leunissen (1989), 378.

⁵² According to Leunissen (1989), 374, L. Ti. Claudius Aurelius Quintianus may have

- Related to (brother or cousin of?) Claudius Pompeianus, *consul ordinarius* 231.
- Related to (cousin of?) Clodius Pompeianus, *consul ordinarius* 241.

Clodius Pompeianus (*PIR*² C 1177; P 570)

Cursus honorum

- *Quaestor* ? 234?
- *Praetor* ? 239?
- *Consul ordinarius* 241 with the emperor Gordianus III
- *Curator aedium sacrarum* 244⁵³

Notes

- Related to (brother or cousin of?) (Ti.) Claudius Pompeianus, *consul ordinarius* 231.

The third-century Claudii Pompeiani descended from Ti. Claudius Pompeianus, an important general of Syrian origin under Marcus Aurelius and *consul II ordinarius* in 173, and Lucilla, Marcus Aurelius' daughter Lucius Verus' widow.⁵⁴ According to the *Historia Augusta*, Claudius Pompeianus was the son of an *eques* and thus the first member of this family to enter the senate.⁵⁵ During the reign of Commodus, no member of the *gens* held a consulship, though Claudius Pompeianus Quintianus, probably the general's nephew and certainly married to the daughter of Lucilla, was *quaestor*. He was killed in 182 after plotting against Commodus.⁵⁶

Although the exact family ties have been disputed, it is clear that several consular men between AD 193 and 284 belonged to this *gens*.⁵⁷ First of all, Aure(l)ius Commodus Pompeianus, who was *consul ordinarius* in 209, and Pompeianus, *suffectus* in 212. Unfortunately, nothing is known about their further careers. The next generation flourished under Severus Alexander: Claudius Pompeianus was *consul ordinarius* in 231 and Claudius Aurelius Quintianus (Pompeianus?) in 235. The fact that

been Ti. Claudius Pompeianus' son. *PIR*² P 567; 569, however, suggests that the *consul suffectus* of 212 was his uncle.

⁵³ These dates are based on Dietz (1980), 128; 355.

⁵⁴ Claudius Pompeianus originated from Antiocheia ad Orontem (Syria). *HA, Vita Marc.* 20,6: '... *filiam suam* [...] *grandaevo equitis Romani filio Claudio Pompeiano dedit genere Antiochensi* ...' ('he married his daughter to Claudius Pompeianus, the son of a Roman knight, and now advanced in years, a native of Antioch ...') On his origin, see also Leunissen (1989), 368; Halfmann (1979), 181–182, no. 103; 200–201, no. 135; Bowersock (1982), 664; Dietz (1983), 389.

⁵⁵ *HA, Vita Marc.* 20, 6.

⁵⁶ On Quintianus, see Dio 73, 4, 4; Herodianus 1, 8, 4–5.

⁵⁷ See Settiani (2000), 302, on the difficulties with establishing the exact family ties between the third-century Claudii Pompeiani and for further references. Cf. Dietz (1980), 125, note 334.

the latter was *quaestor candidatus* indicates that the *gens* had become patrician by that time.⁵⁸ Clodius Pompeianus, the last known descendant of this consular family, held the consulship in 241.

That the *gens Claudia Pompeiana* was a significant senatorial family in the third century can be inferred from their influential colleagues. Aurel(l)ius Commodus Pompeianus' colleague in 209 was Lollianus Plautius Avitus, member of the *gens Hedia Lolliana*. The colleagues of the Pompeiani in 212 and 235 seem to have been members of the *gens Claudia Severa*, descendants of another general of Marcus Aurelius who was married to another daughter of the emperor. The *gens Claudia Pompeiana* and the *gens Claudia Severa* thus both descended from Marcus Aurelius. The colleague of Claudius Pompeianus in 231, Titus Flavius Sallustius Paelignianus, was probably from an Italic patrician family.⁵⁹ Clodius Pompeianus' colleague in 241 was the emperor Gordianus.

There may have been further descendants of this general of Marcus Aurelius, but they did not find their way into the consular *fasti*. It is striking that family disappears from the sources not long after the end of the Severan dynasty.

Table E7. The Claudii Severi⁶⁰

	Ti. Claudius Severus Proculus (<i>PIR</i> ² C 1028)
Cursus honorum	– <i>Consul ordinarius</i> 200 with C. Aufidius Victorinus
Notes	– Son of Cn. Claudius Severus (<i>PIR</i> ² C 1024), <i>consul II ordinarius</i> 173, and of a daughter of Marcus Aurelius. – Related to (father of?) Cn. Claudius Severus, <i>consul ordinarius</i> 235.
	(Cn.? Claudius?) Severus (<i>PIR</i> ² S 634)
Cursus honorum	– <i>Consul suffectus</i> 212? – <i>Praefectus urbi</i> ?? 223 ⁶¹
Notes	– Related to (son of?) Claudius Severus Proculus, <i>consul ordinarius</i> 200, and to (brother of?) Claudius Severus, <i>consul ordinarius</i> 235. ⁶²

⁵⁸ Leunissen (1989), 35, insists that Claudius Aurelius Quintianus was a *patricius*. Cf. *PIR*² C 992 Jacques (1986), 122–123, however, does not mention the Claudii Pompeiani among the patrician *gentes*.

⁵⁹ Leunissen (1989), 109 and 360 with further references.

⁶⁰ For stemmata, see *PIR*², vol. I, 130, and Dietz (1980), 374, stemma 3.

⁶¹ *Cod. Iust.* 4, 56, 2, attests a Severus as *praefectus urbi* in 223. Leunissen (1989), 176, note 211, suggests that the city prefect may have been identical with the Severus who was *consul suffectus* circa 212.

⁶² Leunissen (1989), 374, has suggested that he was the father of Cn. Claudius Severus,

- Cn. Claudius Severus** (*PIR*² C 1025)
- Cursus honorum* – *Consul ordinarius* 235 with L. Ti. Claudius Aurelius Quintinianus (Pompeianus?)
- Notes* – Probably son (or grandson?) of Ti. Claudius Severus Proculus, *consul ordinarius* 200.⁶³
- Brother of Annia Aurelia Faustina, third wife of emperor Elagabalus.⁶⁴

The Claudii Severi descended from Claudius Severus (*PIR*² C 1023), a member of the local elite of Pompeiopolis (Galatia) who was admitted into the senate late first or early second century AD and held a suffect consulate in 112. His son Claudius Severus Arabianus was *consul ordinarius* in 146 and one of Marcus Aurelius' partners in philosophical discussions.⁶⁵ The former fathered Gnaeus Claudius Severus, one of Marcus Aurelius' loyal commanders, who married a daughter of the emperor and was *consul II ordinarius* in 173 with Claudius Pompeianus as his colleague.

The *gens Claudia Severa* provided three consular men in the first half of the third century: Claudius Severus Proculus in 200, (Claudius) Severus in 212, and Claudius Severus in 235. Claudius Severus Proculus' colleague was Gaius Aufidius Victorinus, who was a member of the Italic *gens Aufidia*, which was influential in the second half of the second century AD.⁶⁶ The other two shared their consulships with members of the *gens Claudia Pompeiana*. There are no indications that the Claudii Severi reached patrician status like the Claudii Pompeiani did.

Although the consular *fasti* mention no member of the Claudii Severi after 235, the family seemed to have remained members in the senate until at least the reign of Diocletian, when a *vir clarissimus* called Tiberius Claudius Severus set up a dedication to the emperor.⁶⁷

consul ordinarius 235, but more scholars accept that he was the son of Claudius Severus Proculus and thus brother of Claudius Severus.

⁶³ Leunissen (1989), 374, suggests that he was the son of (Cn. Claudius) Severus, *consul suffectus* 212.

⁶⁴ Dietz (1980), 128.

⁶⁵ Fronto addressed *Ad amicos* 1, 1, to him. Birley (1987), 95 f. Cf. *HA, Vita Marc.* 3, 3.

⁶⁶ He was the son of C. Aufidius Victorinus, *consul II ordinarius* in 183, and brother of M. Aufidius Fronto, *consul ordinarius* 199. The family originated from Pisaurum (Umbria). See Leunissen (1989), 357 and 372.

⁶⁷ *CIL* 6.1119a (Roma), which is dated between 293 and 295. See *PIR*² C 1026; *PLRE I*, Severus 22.

Table E8. The Egnatii⁶⁸

	(L.) Egnatius Victor (<i>PIR</i> ² E 35)
<i>Cursus honorum</i>	– <i>Consul suffectus</i> before 207 – <i>Legatus Augg pr pr Pannoniae Superioris</i> 207
<i>Notes</i>	– May have been related to M. Egnatius Postumus (<i>PIR</i> ² E 26), <i>consul suffectus</i> 183. ⁶⁹ – May have been related to (brother or cousin?) the Egnatii Proculi, <i>consules suffecti</i> late 2nd/early 3rd century. ⁷⁰ – Married a sister of Lollianus Plautius Avitus, <i>consul ordinarius</i> 209, and of (Hedius) Terentius Gentianus, <i>consul ordinarius</i> 211. ⁷¹ – Probably father of L. Egnatius Victor Lollianus, <i>consul suffectus</i> ca. 225 / 230, of (Egnatia) Mariniana, and perhaps also of Egnatius Victor Marinianus, <i>consul suffectus</i> ca. 230. ⁷²
	A. Egnatius Proculus (<i>PIR</i> ² E 30)
<i>Cursus honorum</i>	– <i>Legatus Aug Africae dioeces(eos) Numidiae</i> – <i>Legatus legionis VIII Aug. Piae Fidelis</i> in Germania Superior – <i>Praefectus frumenti dandi</i> – <i>Praefectus aerarii Saturni</i> – <i>Consul suffectus</i> late 2nd/early 3rd century – <i>Curator Bovianensium, Albensium Fucentium, Concordiensium</i>
<i>Notes</i>	– May have been related (brother or cousin?) to Egnatius Victor, <i>consul suffectus</i> before 207. – Possibly brother of Q. Egnatius Proculus. ⁷³
	Q. Egnatius Proculus (<i>PIR</i> ² E 29; 31)
<i>Cursus honorum</i>	– <i>Consul suffectus</i> late 2nd / early 3rd century ⁷⁴ – <i>Legatus Aug consularis ad corrigendum statum liberarum civitatum provinciae Achaiae</i>

⁶⁸ Stemmata can be found in Dietz (1980), stemma 7 and Settapani (2000), 398–400. The exact family ties, however, are disputed.

⁶⁹ Leunissen (1989), 355 with further references.

⁷⁰ Dietz (1980), stemma 7. Cf. Settapani (2000), 397–399.

⁷¹ Settapani (2000), 406–407.

⁷² Leunissen (1989), 374; Settapani (2000), 399.

⁷³ According to *PIR*² E 30 it is unlikely that they were the same man; Chausson has made a suggestion on their relation. See Settapani (2000), 398–399, with further references. However, as far as I can determine, this assumption is not supported by any evidence.

⁷⁴ According to Settapani (2000), 398–399, he was *consul suffectus* in 219.

- Notes**
- May have been related (brother or cousin?) to Egnatius Victor, *consul suffectus* before 207.
 - Possibly brother of A. Egnatius Proculus.
 - Seems to have been the son-in-law of L. Marius Perpetuus, *consul suffectus* ca. 203, or of Marius Perpetuus, *consul ordinarius* 237.⁷⁵
- Cursus honorum**
- L. Egnatius Victor Lollianus (PIR² E 36)**
- *Legatus Aug pr pr Galatiae* 218⁷⁶
 - *Consul suffectus* ca. 225 / 230
 - *Corrector Achaiae* ca. 230
 - *Legatus Aug pr pr Bithyniae et Ponti* 230 / 235
 - *Legatus Aug pr pr Pannoniae Inferioris* ?? 222 / 235⁷⁷
 - *Proconsul Asiae ter* 242 / 247⁷⁸
 - *Praefectus urbi* 254
- Notes**
- Probably son of (L.) Egnatius Victor, *consul suffectus* before 207.
 - Probably brother of Egnatius Victor Marinianus, *consul suffectus* ca. 230, and of (Egnatia) Mariniana Augusta, wife of Valerianus.
 - May have been related to Egnatius Lucilianus (PIR² E 23), *consul suffectus* before 238, *legatus Augusti pr pr Britanniae (Inferioris)* under Gordianus III.⁷⁹

⁷⁵ Although it seems likely, it is not entirely certain whether Egnatius Proculus (PIR² E 29), *legatus Augusti* in Achaia and Q. Egnatius Proculus (PIR² E 31), *consul suffectus* at an uncertain date, are identical. If not, Q. Egnatius Proculus may have been *suffectus* later and son-in-law of Marius Perpetuus, *ordinarius* in 237. This has been suggested by Dietz (1980), 189, and Settapani (2000), 399, who date Proculus' consulate after 260.

⁷⁶ The dates of all these positions are based on Leunissen (1989), *passim*.

⁷⁷ According to Fitz, who based this on very fragmentary remains. Quoted in Leunissen (1989), 210; 257.

⁷⁸ Leunissen (1989), 185, suggests that he may have been sent there by Gordianus III *extra sortem* in connection with the campaign against the Persians and that he was allowed to retain the position under Philippus. Körner (2002), 200, points out that his retention of the office indicates immediate support on his part for Philippus as new emperor.

⁷⁹ According to Dietz (1980), 357. From *CIL* 7.445; 1030, we learn that Egnatius Lucilianus was governor of Britannia during the reign of Gordianus. It may be assumed that he previously held a consulship. It has been suggested (see PIR² E 23) that this Egnatius Lucilianus may have been the father of Lucillus, *consul ordinarius* 265 with Gallienus' brother or son Valerianus as his colleague. According to *HA, Vita Gall.* 12, 1, this Lucillus was related to Gallienus. Jacques (1986), 178–179, however, asserts that a relation between the Egnatii and Egnatius Lucilianus, *legatus Britanniae inferioris* 238 / 244 is very doubtful.

- Egnatius Victor Marinianus** (*PIR*² E 25; 37)
- Cursus honorum*
- *Legatus Aug pr pr Arabiae* before 230?
 - *Consul suffectus* ca. 230
 - *Legatus Aug pr pr Moesiae Superioris* ca. 230?⁸⁰
- Notes*
- Probably son of (L.) Egnatius Victor, *consul suffectus* before 207.
 - Probably brother Egnatius Victor Lollianus, *consul suffectus* ca. 225 / 230, and of (Egnatia) Mariniana.⁸¹
 - Brother of L. Egnatius Victor Lollianus, *consul suffectus* ca. 225 / 230.
 - May have been related to C. Luxilius Sabinus Egnatius Proculus (*PIR*² L 452), who was *tribunus laticlavii legionis IV Flaviae* during the reign of Severus Alexander (perhaps under Egnatius Marinianus when he was governor of Moesia Superior)—*quaestor pr pr provinciae Cretae Cyrenarum*—*aedilis Cerialis*—*praetor*—*legatus provinciae Achaiae*—*curator viarum et praefectus alimentorum Clodiae et coherentium*—*iuridicus regionis Transpadanae*—*legatus decimae geminae Gordianae* 238 / 244—*curator rerum publicarum Pisaurensium et Fanestrium*.⁸²
- (Licinius Egnatius) Marinianus** (*PIR*² L 198/*PLRE* I, **Marinianus 1**)
- Cursus honorum*
- *Consul ordinarius* 268 with (Aspasius?) Paternus
- Notes*
- Probably descended from (great-grandson of?) Egnatius Victor Marinianus, *consul suffectus* ca. 230. Perhaps he was the son of a brother or sister of emperor Gallienus, or the youngest son of Gallienus himself.⁸³
 - Killed at the end of the reign of Gallienus.⁸⁴

⁸⁰ Leunissen (1989), 186, note 250, points out that this date, which was suggested by Stein, was based on the assumption that Egnatius (Victor) Marinianus was the father-in-law of Valerianus. Christol (1986), 191, however, has demonstrated that it is more likely that Egnatia Mariniana was Marinianus' sister. In that case, Marinianus' governorship of Moesia Superior should probably be dated later.

⁸¹ Dietz (1980), 152, follows *PIR*² E 37 in suggesting that this man was Valerianus' father-in-law. More recently, however, the assumption that Mariniana was a daughter of Egnatius Victor, *legatus* of Pannonia Superior in 207, instead of a daughter of Egnatius Victor Marinianus, has become the accepted notion. See Christol (1986), 191. Cf. Leunissen (1989), 186, note 250.

⁸² According to Petersen, *PIR*² L 452, followed by Dietz (1980), 183 f., and most recently by Settapani (2000), 397–399. Petersen suggests that this Luxilius Sabinus Egnatius Proculus was related by marriage to the Egnatii Proculi (*PIR*² E 29–33), who had consular careers during the reigns of the Severi.

⁸³ See *PIR*² L 198; Christol (1986), 109.

⁸⁴ Aurelius Victor, *Liber de Caesaribus* 33, 31; Zonaras 12, 26.

The Egnatii probably had Etruscan origins, although Bithynian or Numidian origins have also been suggested.⁸⁵ Members of the *gens Egnatia* first appear in the consular *fasti* late second, early third century AD.

Egnatius Victor held a consulate in 207. Egnatius Victor Lollianus, *consul suffectus* ca. 225 / 230, and Egnatius Victor Marinianus, *consul suffectus* ca. 230, were probably his sons, and presumably he had a daughter (Egnatia) Mariniana, who would marry the future emperor Licinius Valerianus. Valerianus, who seems to have been a supporter of the Gordiani, might have convinced his brother-in-law Egnatius Victor Lollianus to support them as well. In any case, it is striking that the summit of Lollianus' career was reached at the end of the reign of Gordianus III, when he held the position of governor of Africa for three years. That members of the *gens Egnatia* continued to hold consular positions during the reigns of Valerianus and Gallienus is of course not surprising. Egnatius Victor Lollianus was city prefect in 254, and Marinianus was *consul ordinarius* in 268 with a colleague named Paternus, whose identity cannot be determined. That no member of the *gens Egnatia* held consular positions in the period 268 to 284 is even less surprising, as the family was related to Gallienus. Most members of the *gens* were probably killed with the emperor, or at least lost their wealth and status.

The Egnatii were connected to the Hedii Lolliani through marriage. It has also been suggested that the Egnatii Victores were related to the Egnatii Proculi, who underwent consular careers under the Severi and were related through marriage to the Marii.⁸⁶ In the fourth century, the Egnatii appear in the consular *fasti* again, by which time they may have established relations with the Acilii as well.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ On their origins, see Dietz (1980), 356; Jacques (1986), 178; Leunissen (1989), 358 and 360; Körner (2002), 191 and 338.

⁸⁶ Based on an unpublished inscription, Jacques (1986), 178–179, suggests relations between Valerianus and Egnatius Certus Settianus, who was attested in Beneventum in 254 (*RE* Suppl. 14, 115, no. 17a). This Egnatius was probably the son of C. Egnatius Certus (*PIR*² E 20), *consul suffectus* in the first half of the third century. According to Jacques, however, these Egnatii Certi probably belonged to a separate but related branch of Egnatii from Beneventum.

⁸⁷ According to Jacques (1986), 178–179.

Table E9. The Fulvii Aemiliani

	Fulvius Gavius (Numisius) Petronius Aemilianus (<i>PIR</i> ² F 528)
<i>Cursus honorum</i>	– <i>Consul ordinarius</i> 206 with M. Nummius Umbrius Primus Senecio Albinus
<i>Notes</i>	– Perhaps father of Fulvius Aemilianus, <i>consul ordinarius</i> 244, and of Fulvius Aemilianus, <i>consul II ordinarius</i> 249. ⁸⁸
	L. Fulvius Gavius N[umisius ...] Aemilianus (<i>PIR</i> ² F 540)
<i>Cursus honorum</i>	– (<i>Quaestor candidatus</i> ?) – <i>Praetor candidatus</i> – <i>Electus ad [dilectum habendum?] per regionem Transpadanam</i> after 222 – <i>Consul suffectus</i> 223 / 235; 226 or 229? ⁸⁹ – <i>Consul II ordinarius</i> ?? 249 ⁹⁰ – <i>Praefectus urbi</i> ?? 249 ⁹¹
<i>Notes</i>	– Perhaps son of Fulvius Aemilianus, <i>consul ordinarius</i> 206. – Perhaps older brother of Fulvius Aemilianus, <i>consul ordinarius</i> 244.
	L. Fulvius Gavius Numisius Aemilianus (<i>PIR</i> ² F 529)
<i>Cursus honorum</i>	– <i>Quaestor</i> 237 – <i>Consul ordinarius</i> 244 with Ti. Pollenius Armenius Peregrinus
<i>Notes</i>	– Perhaps son of F. Gavius (Numisius) Petronius Aemilianus, <i>consul ordinarius</i> 206. – Perhaps brother of F. Fulvius Gavius N[umisius] Aemilianus, <i>consul suffectus</i> 222 / 235.

It is hard to determine when the Fulvii Aemiliani, who seem to have had been of Italian origin, entered the senate.⁹² Lucius Fulvius Rusticus Aemilianus (*PIR*² F 557) was *consul suffectus* in the second century and probably the father of Lucius Fulvius Gavius Numisius Petronius

⁸⁸ Leunissen (1989), 374; Körner (2002), 338.

⁸⁹ The date is based on Leunissen (1989), 187–188.

⁹⁰ It is possible that it was his younger brother Fulvius Aemilianus, *consul ordinarius* 244, who held this second consulship in 249, but that would leave a very short interval between the two consulates. That is why nowadays it is assumed that this consulship was held by this Fulvius Aemilianus, who had been *suffectus* under Severus Alexander. See Leunissen (1989), 187, note 257 for further references.

⁹¹ See Dietz (1980), 165, with further references.

⁹² On their origins, see Dietz (1980), 356; Leunissen (1989), 358; 360; Körner (2002), 338.

Aemilianus (*PIR*² F 541) who was *quaestor candidatus* and not much later *praetor tutelarius candidatus*, probably in 169, appointed by Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus. By that time, the family seems to have had patrician status.⁹³

The first consular member between AD 193 and 284 was Fulvius Gavius (Numisius) Petronius Aemilianus who was *consul ordinarius* in 206. He was probably the son of the *praetor tutelarius* of 169 and seems to have been the father of the Fulvius Aemilianus, *consul suffectus* under Severus Alexander and *consul iterum* in 249, and of Fulvius Aemilianus, *consul ordinarius* in 244.⁹⁴ Their consular colleagues were all successful senators: the other *consul ordinarius* in 206 was Marcus Nummius Umbrius Primus Senecio Albinus, member of the patrician *gens Nummia*, which will be discussed below. In 244, the second *consul ordinarius* was Tiberius Pollenius Armenius Peregrinus who was adopted into the *gens Polliena*, and then in 249, Lucius Naevius Aquilinus, who would hold the position of governor of Africa under Gallienus, became Fulvius Aemilianus' colleague.

It has been suggested that the *gens Fulvia Aemiliana* had been related to the Bruttii since the first century AD and that the *gens* also had connections with the Nummii Umbrii.⁹⁵ Laelius (Fulvius?) Maximus Aemilianus, *consul ordinarius* in 227, may have been distantly related as well.⁹⁶ After 249, no member of the *gens Fulvia Aemiliana* can be traced in the consular *fasti*, although it has been suggested that Aemilianus, *consul II ordinarius* in 276, belonged to this *gens*.⁹⁷ Yet such a connection cannot be established with certainty.

⁹³ On their patrician status, see Dietz (1980), 160; Leunissen (1989), 35; Körner (2002), 338. Jacques (1986), 122–123, does not include the Fulvii in his list of patrician families.

⁹⁴ The city prefect Fulvius mentioned by Dio 80, 21, 1–2, who was killed in 222 immediately after the death of Elagabalus, may also have been related to this *gens*, but there are other possibilities. Leunissen (1989) 166, note 167, for example, assumes that the city prefect was identical to C. Fulvius Maximus, *consul suffectus* before 210.

⁹⁵ On this matter, see Dietz (1980), 161–163, with further references. The posited connection with the Bruttii is based on the nomenclature of L. Fulvius ... C. Bruttius Praesens (*PIR*² B 165), *consul* 153, *consul II ordinarius* 180.

⁹⁶ According to Settapani (2000), 152, Laelius (Fulvius?) Maximus Aemilianus was the grandson of a sister of Fulvius Gavius Aemilianus, *praetor* 169. Alföldy (1982), 363, also mentions close ties ('enge Beziehungen') between the Laelii Maximi and the Fulvii.

⁹⁷ See Dietz (1980), 368, stemma 4.

Table E10. The Hedii Lolliani⁹⁸

	Q. Hedi Rufus Lollianus Gentianus (<i>PIR</i> ² H 42)
Cursus honorum	– <i>Triumvir monetalis</i> (<i>triumvir auro argento aere flando feriundo</i>) – <i>Tribunus (militum) legionis VII Geminae piae felicis</i> – <i>Quaestor candidatus</i> – <i>Praetor candidatus</i> – <i>Legatus legionis XXII Primigeniae</i> ca. 184 – <i>Consul suffectus</i> ca. 186 / 188 – (<i>Curator rei publicae Puteolanorum et Veliternorum</i> ??) – <i>Legatus Augusti pro praetore Hispaniae citerioris</i> (<i>item censitor Hispaniae citerioris</i> ??) ?189-?192 – <i>Comes Severi et Antonini Augustorum</i> ter 194 / 197 – <i>Censitor provinciae Lugdunensis</i> 197/?198 – (<i>Censitor Hispaniae citerioris</i> ??) ?198 / 199 – <i>Proconsul Asiae</i> 201 / 202 ⁹⁹
Notes	– Grandson of L. (Hedius Rufus) Lollianus Avitus (<i>PIR</i> ² H 39), <i>consul suffectus</i> 114, and <i>proconsul Asiae</i> 128 / 129. – Son of L. Hedi Rufus Lollianus Avitus (<i>PIR</i> ² H 40), <i>consul ordinarius</i> 144. ¹⁰⁰ – Brother of L. Hedi Rufus Lollianus (<i>PIR</i> ² H 41), <i>consul suffectus</i> and <i>proconsul Asiae</i> probably before 193. – Father of Q. (Hedius) Lollianus Plautius Avitus, <i>consul ordinarius</i> 209; of (Hedius Lollianus) Terentius Gentianus, <i>consul ordinarius</i> 211; and of (Hedia) Terentia Flavola (<i>PIR</i> ² H 44), <i>virgo Vestalis maxima</i> . He had another son (<i>PIR</i> ² H 34) who probably died ca. 209 / 210. – <i>Patronus</i> of Pertinax. ¹⁰¹

⁹⁸ A stemma is in *PIR*², pars IV, fasc. 2, 52 and Settapani (2000), 407. On (members of) the family, see also Christol (1981); Alföldy (1982), 326 no. 5; Guidanti (1995).

⁹⁹ These dates are based on Christol (1981).

¹⁰⁰ L. Hedi Rufus Lollianus Avitus was *consul ordinarius* in 144, *curator operum publicorum* 146, *proconsul Africae* probably 157 / 158, *legatus Augg pro praetore Bithyniae (et Ponti)* 159. He was probably assigned a special task when Verus left the East. Furthermore, he was an orator, *amicus* of Fronto, and *patronus* of Helvius Successus, Pertinax' father. He was married to a daughter of Terentius Gentianus, *consul suffectus* 116.

¹⁰¹ According to *PIR*² H 42, basing this on the fact that his father was Pertinax' father's *patronus*.

- Cursus honorum** Q. (Hedius) Lollianus Plautius Avitus (*PIR*² H 36)
- *Triumvir monetalis auro argento aere flando feriundo*
 - *Tribunus laticlavii legionis XIII Geminae* in Dacia
 - *Quaestor candidatus* 195?
 - *Praetor candidatus tutelaris* 200
 - *Legatus Augg provinciae Asiae* 201 / 202
 - *Iuridicus Asturiae et Callaeciae*
 - *Legatus legionis VII Geminae piae fidelis* in Hispania Citerior 202-?205
 - *Consul ordinarius* 209 with Aurel(i)us Commodus Pompeianus
 - *Proconsul Asiae* ca. 224?¹⁰²
- Notes**
- Son of Q. Hedius Rufus Lollianus Gentianus, *consul suffectus* ca. 186 / 188.
 - Brother of (Hedius Lollianus) Terentius Gentianus, *consul ordinarius* 211.
- Cursus honorum** (Hedius Lollianus) Terentius Gentianus (*PIR*² H 37)
- *Praetor tutelaris* 209
 - *Consul ordinarius* 211 with (Pomponius) Bassus
- Notes**
- Son of Q. Hedius Rufus Lollianus Gentianus, *consul suffectus* ca. 186 / 188.
 - Brother of Q. (Hedius) Lollianus Plautius Avitus, *consul ordinarius* 209.
 - Married to Pomponia Paetina, who seems to have been related to (Pomponius) Bassus, Terentius' consular colleague in 211.¹⁰³

The *gens Hediana Lolliana*, which was probably from Liguria (Italy), occurs as consular family during the second century and the beginning of the third century AD.¹⁰⁴ The third-century Hedii Lolliani were descendants of Lucius (Hedius) Lollianus Avitus, *consul suffectus* in AD 114. His son, Lucius Hedius Rufus Lollianus Avitus, was *consul ordinarius* exactly thirty years later: AD 144. It was probably this man, who dared criticize Pertinax for breaking a promise, according to the *Historia Augusta*.¹⁰⁵ Even if the incident was made up, the suggestion that a Lollianus could do this demonstrates that the *gens* was powerful at the end of the second century AD.

¹⁰² The dates are based on Leunissen (1989), *passim*.

¹⁰³ According to *PIR*² H 37 and P 707, the name of C. Pomponius Bassus Terentianus, *consul suffectus* circa 193, appears to indicate that the *gentes* were united at the end of the second century AD.

¹⁰⁴ The *gens* had properties in Liguria, where Pertinax was born as well. On the geographical origin of the *gens*, see Leunissen (1989), 356.

¹⁰⁵ *HA, Vita Pert.* 7, 6.

Between AD 193 and 284 consular positions were held by several members of the *gens*. First of all, Hedijs Rufus Lollianus Gentianus, who was *consul suffectus* circa 186 / 188. He joined the emperor's entourage thrice during the early years of the reign of Septimius Severus, after which he held several positions as *censitor* and eventually became governor of Asia.¹⁰⁶ Considering the fact that he was both *quaestor* and *praetor* as imperial *candidatus*, the *gens* must have reached patrician status by that time. Gentianus' older brother, Lucius Hedijs Rufus Lollianus (*PIR*² H 41), was *consul suffectus* and *proconsul Asiae* as well, but he may have held these positions before 193 and there is no evidence that his career continued during the reign of Severus. Lollianus Plautius Avitus, son of Gentianus, held an ordinary consulship at the end of the reign of Severus and, like his father, was *proconsul Asiae*, probably shortly after Severus Alexander became emperor. His colleague, Aurel(i)us Commodus Pompeianus, was a member of the *gens Claudia Pompeiana*, and his brother, Terentius Gentianus, was *consul ordinarius* in 211 with (Pomponius) Bassus as his colleague, who may have been a relative.¹⁰⁷

The sister of the consuls of 209 and 211 married Egnatius Victor. Their daughter, (Egnatia) Mariniana, would marry the future emperor Valerianus, while their son, Lucius Egnatius Victor Lollianus, held a suffect consulship in 225 and seems to have been the last consul bearing the name Lollianus.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ He can only have been *comes* thrice at the beginning of Septimius Severus' reign, in the expedition against Niger (*expeditio Asiana*), the first Parthian War, and against Albinus (*expeditio Gallica*). Birley (1988), 76, suggests that Septimius Severus and Lollianus Gentianus may have met when Severus was governor of Lugdunensis and Lollianus Gentianus was on his way from Rome to Moguntiacum to take up his position as commander of legion XXII *Primigenia*. There is no evidence that they actually met then and there, but it is very unlikely that Septimius Severus did not know him, or at least his father, who was one of the more senior senators in those days.

¹⁰⁷ (Pomponius) Bassus, the *consul ordinarius* in 211, may have been the son of [C. Pomponius] Bass[us Terentianus], *consul suffectus* circa 193, but since their names were not preserved completely, this is hypothetical. For this suggestion and further references, see Leunissen (1989), 357, note 26.

¹⁰⁸ Two more male Hedii Lolliani of next generations are known to us: (Q. Hedijs) Lollianus Gentianus, probably a nephew of (Hedijs) Terentius Gentianus, *consul ordinarius* 211, and Q. (Hedijs) Terentius Rufus. Although apparently they were senators, since they were called *vir clarissimus*, they do not appear in the consular *fasti*.

Table E11. The Marii¹⁰⁹

	L. Marius Maximus Perpetuus Aurelianus (PIR² M 308)
Cursus honorum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>Quattuorvir viarum curandarum</i> under Marcus Aurelius¹¹⁰ – <i>Tribunus laticlavus legionis XXII Primigeniae</i> – <i>Tribunus laticlavus legionis III Italicae</i> 178/180 – <i>Quaestor urbanus</i> ?182/183 – <i>Tribunus plebis candidatus</i> – <i>Adlectus inter praetorios</i> – <i>Curator viae Latinae</i> ca. 190 – <i>Curator rei publicae Faventinorum</i> N-Italy – <i>Legatus legionis I Italicae</i> ca. 193 – <i>Dux exercitus Mysiaci (= Moesiaci) apud Byzantium</i> 193/196 – <i>Dux exercitus Mysiaci apud Lugdunum</i> 197 – <i>Legatus Augustorum pro praetore Belgicae</i> 197-?199 – <i>Consul suffectus</i> ca. 199/200¹¹¹ – <i>Legatus Augusti pr pr Germaniae Inferioris</i> – <i>Legatus Augg pr pr Syriae Coelis</i> ?205-?208 – <i>Proconsul Africae</i> ?213/214 or ?216/217 – <i>Proconsul Asiae II</i> 214–216 or 213–215¹¹² – <i>Praefectus urbi</i> 218–219 – <i>Consul II ordinarius</i> 223 with L. Roscius Aelianus Paculus Salvius Iulianus – (<i>Curator Ardeatinorum</i>??)
Notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Son of equestrian <i>procurator</i> L. Marius Perpetuus (PIR² M 313).¹¹³ – Brother of L. Marius Perpetuus, <i>consul suffectus</i> ca. 203? – Father of L. Marius Maximus, <i>consul ordinarius</i> 232.

¹⁰⁹ Stemmata can be found in PIR², pars V, fasc. 2, 205; Dietz (1980), stemma 7; Settiani (2000), 399.

¹¹⁰ His career is rendered completely in CIL 6.1450 = ILS 2935 (Roma). On his career, see also Birley (1997b), esp. 2694–2703. The dates are based on Leunissen (1989), 382.

¹¹¹ Probably during his service as governor of Belgica. See Leunissen (1989), 284.

¹¹² Both that he held this position for two consecutive years and that he was both *proconsul Africae* and *proconsul Asiae* were highly unusual. On this, see Leunissen (1989), 217 and 224–225. See Thomasson (1996), 85 about the problem of dating and deciding which proconsulship was first.

¹¹³ Leunissen (1989), 48. L. Marius Perpetuus was *procurator monetae*, *procurator vicesimae hereditatum*, *procurator stationis hereditatum* and *procurator provinciae Lugdunensis et Aquitaniae*. He was a protégé of Gavius Maximus, *praefectus praetorio* under Antoninus Pius.

- Related to (father/uncle of?) L. Marius Perpetuus, *consul ordinarius* 237.
 - Author of the lives of emperors from Nerva until Elagabalus.¹¹⁴
- L. Marius Perpetuus (PIR² M 311)**
- Cursus honorum*
- (*Vigintivir?*)¹¹⁵
 - *Tribunus laticlavius legionis IV Scythicae* in Syria
 - *Quaestor candidatus Augusti*
 - (*Tribunus plebis/aedilis?*)
 - (*Praetor?*)
 - (*Adlectio inter praetorios?*)
 - *Legatus legionis XVI Flaviae firmae* in Syria Coele under governor Alfenus Senecio 200 or ca. 203
 - *Legatus (praeses) Augg pr pr Arabiae* ca. 200 / 207
 - *Consul suffectus* ca. 203? or 208? or 214?
 - *Curator rerum publicarum Urbisalviensium (in Piceno) item Tusculanorum* 204 / 211?¹¹⁶
 - *Legatus Aug pr pr Moesiae Superioris* 211–214?, or 208–211?
 - *Legatus Aug pr pr Tres Daciae* 214?–215 / 216, or 211–214 (the latter according to *PIR*)¹¹⁷
 - *Proconsul (Africae/Asiae??)* ca. 218 / 219?¹¹⁸
- Notes*
- Son of equestrian *procurator* L. Marius Perpetuus (*PIR*² M 313).
 - Brother of L. Marius Maximus Perpetuus Aurelianus, *consul II ordinarius* 223.
 - Uncle of L. Marius Maximus, *consul ordinarius* 232.
 - Related to (father/uncle of?) L. Marius Perpetuus, *consul ordinarius* 237.
- L. Marius Maximus (PIR² M 307)**
- Cursus honorum*
- *Consul ordinarius* 232 with Virius Lupus (Iulianus?)
- Notes*
- Son of L. Marius Maximus Perpetuus Aurelianus, *consul II ordinarius* 223.
 - Brother or cousin of L. Marius Perpetuus, *consul ordinarius* 237.

¹¹⁴ *HA, Vita Elag.* 11,6.

¹¹⁵ The dates of many positions are disputed. Those mentioned here are based mainly on Leunissen (1989), 379, and Thomasson (1985), 125–126. Cf. *PIR*² M 312.

¹¹⁶ According to *PIR*² M 312, the consulship was held after his curatorships in Italy.

¹¹⁷ *CIL* 3.1178 = *ILS* 1165 (Dacia) points at judicial duties in Dacia (*'praeses iustissimus'*).

¹¹⁸ Based on *CIL* 6.41188 = *AE* 1987, no. 69 (Roma). See Leunissen (1989), 228.

- L. Marius Perpetuus (PIR² M 312)**
- Cursus honorum* – *Consul ordinarius* 237 with L. Mummius Felix Cornelianus
- Notes*
- Son or nephew of L. Marius Maximus Perpetuus Aurelianus, *consul II ordinarius* 223.
 - Son or nephew of L. Marius Perpetuus, *consul suffectus* ca. 203?
 - Brother or cousin of L. Marius Maximus, *consul ordinarius* 232.
 - Perhaps brother-in-law of Egnatius Proculus, *consul suffectus* late 2nd/early 3rd century.¹¹⁹

The *gens Maria* probably had its origins either in Italy or in Africa.¹²⁰ In the second century the family had equestrian status. Apparently, *procurator* Marius Perpetuus secured entry into the senatorial order for his sons.

At the beginning of the reign of Septimius Severus, Marius Maximus, probably the elder son, was able to extend the status of the family due to loyal service as *dux* of the new emperor during the civil wars. The *gens* having become part of the high nobility. General Marius Maximus was rewarded with a suffect consulate soon after the wars, circa 199 / 200. His brother Marius Perpetuus was also appointed *consul suffectus*, although it has been disputed whether his consulship was held under Severus, soon after his brother's, or under Caracalla. While most of the consular part of Perpetuus' career seems to have taken place under Severus' son, Marius Maximus' consular career covered the reigns of all the Severi, up to the beginning of the reign of Severus Alexander. That Marius Maximus was made proconsul of both Africa and Asia under Caracalla, and that he even served a double term in the latter, was unprecedented, and suggests that the emperor held him in high regard. Apparently, this did not prevent Caracalla's successor Macrinus from appointing him city prefect in 218, as successor of Oclatinus Adventus. During the reign of Elagabalus, Marius Maximus disappeared from public view, but he reappeared as *consul iterum* as colleague of Lucius Roscius Aelianus Paculus Salvius Iulianus, the son of Roscius Aelianus Paculus, *consul ordinarius* in 187, and the stepson of Marcus Nummius Umbrius Primus Senecio Albinus, *consul ordinarius* in 206.¹²¹

Another Marius Maximus, probably the son of the *consul iterum* of 223, held an ordinary consulate in 232 with Virius Lupus (Iulianus?) as

¹¹⁹ See Dietz (1980), stemma 7.

¹²⁰ On their origins, see Dietz (1980), 358; Leunissen (1989), 362–364.

¹²¹ Leunissen (1989), 373.

his colleague, a member of the *gens Viria*. Marius Perpetuus, another member of this *gens*, was *consul ordinarius* in 237 under Maximinus Thrax. His colleague, Lucius Mummius Felix Cornelianus, seems to have been related to the patrician Lucius Mummius Maxi[us] Fa[us]tinianus, and to Mummius Bassus, *consul ordinarius* in 258.¹²² Unfortunately, nothing is known about the further careers of these last two Marii.

After 237, the *gens* seems to have disappeared completely from the consular *fasti*. The Marii were connected to the Egnatii (Proculi) through marriage.¹²³

Table E12. The Nummii¹²⁴

	M. Nummius Umbrius Primus Senecio Albinus (<i>PIR</i> ² N 238)
<i>Cursus honorum</i>	– <i>Triumvir monetalis (auro argento aere flando feriundo)</i> ¹²⁵
	– <i>Sevir equitum Romanorum turmae primae</i>
	– <i>Curator Cart(aginensium)</i>
	– <i>Quaestor candidatus Augg</i> ca. 199
	– <i>Legatus (proconsulis) Asiae and/or Africae?</i> ca. 202, or 208 / 209? ¹²⁶
	– <i>Praetor candidatus Augg</i> ca. 204
	– <i>Consul ordinarius</i> 206 with Fulvius Aemilianus
	– <i>Electus ab Augustis ad cognoscendum vice sacra</i> 208 / 209?
	– <i>Legatus Augg/Aug pr pr Hispaniae Citerioris</i> 209?/211–212?
	– <i>Legatus Augg pr pr Dalmatiae</i> 212?–214?
	– <i>Proconsul Asiae??</i> ca. 221 / 222 ¹²⁷

¹²² Dietz (1980), 191.

¹²³ Maria Aurelia(na) Violentilla (*PIR*² M 325), probably daughter of Perpetuus, *consul ordinarius* 237, married Q. Egnatius Proculus (*PIR*² E 31), *consul suffectus* at an uncertain date. See Dietz (1980), 189; Settapani (2000), 399.

¹²⁴ For stemmata, see *PLRE* I, 1142, no. 21 and Settapani (2000–2002), addenda I, 26; 34–35. According to Jacques (1986), 200, responsibility for the obscurity of this *gens* lies in the *Historia Augusta* which created anachronistic relations between the Ceionii and the Nummii to praise them.

¹²⁵ Much discussion has focused on the exact course of this man's career. In addition to *PIR*² N 238, see also Leunissen (1989), 226; 240; Peachin (1996), 97–100 for some more recent views on, for instance, dates of positions and with further references.

¹²⁶ Thomasson (1996), 115, no. 51, argues that Nummius Albinus was *legatus* in both Africa and Asia.

¹²⁷ Suggested by Eck in *RE Suppl.* 14, 288 ff.

- Notes** – Probably the son of Nummius Albinus (*PIR*² N 226), (half-)brother of Didius Iulianus, and adopted son of M. Umbrius Primus (*PIR* V 596), *proconsul Africae* ca. 201 / 202.¹²⁸
- Father of M. Nummius Senecio Albinus, *consul ordinarius* 227.
- M. Nummius Senecio Albinus** (*PIR*² N 235)
- Cursus honorum** – *Consul ordinarius* 227 with Laelius (Fulvius?) Maximus Aemilianus
- Notes** – Son of M. Nummius Umbrius Primus Senecio Albinus, *consul ordinarius* 206.
- Stepbrother (*frater uterinus*) of L. Roscius Aelianus Paculus Salvius Iulianus, *consul ordinarius* 223.¹²⁹
- Father of M. Nummius Tuscus, *consul ordinarius* 258, and perhaps also of M. Nummius Albinus, *consul II ordinarius* 263.
- M. Nummius Albinus (= M. Nummius Attidius Senecio Albinus)** (*PIR*² N 227/*PLRE* I, Albinus 9)¹³⁰
- Cursus honorum** – (*Consul suffectus* before 256, ca. 240?)
- *Praefectus urbi* 256 and 261–263
- *Consul II ordinarius* 263 with Dexter/Maximus
- Notes** – Perhaps son of M. Nummius Senecio Albinus, *consul ordinarius* 227.¹³¹

¹²⁸ That Senecio Albinus' father was a brother of Didius Iulianus, is recorded in the *Historia Augusta, Vita Did. Iul.*, 1, 1–2. There is some question as to whether Nummius Umbrius Primus Senecio Albinus was the son of Nummius Albinus and then adopted by M. Umbrius Primus, the traditional view, or whether he was the son of Umbrius Primus and adopted by Nummius Albinus. Cf. *PIR* V 3; Leunissen (1989), 109; Peachin (1996), 98, note 34. Contrary to what has been suggested, Nummius Albinus (*PIR*² N 226) was not identical to Ceionius Albinus (*PIR*² C 599), who was killed by Septimius Severus, since it has become clear that the Nummii and Ceioni were not linked before the end of the third century AD.

¹²⁹ Settapani (2000–2002), addenda I, 36, suggests that Roscius Aelianus Paculus Salvius Iulianus was more distantly related to Nummius Senecio Albinus, *consul ordinarius* 227.

¹³⁰ *CIL* 06.41225a = *AE* 2000, 93 = *AE* 2000, 179 (Roma). [Nu]mmius Albi[nus] (*PIR*² N 228) may have been identical with this man. He was either *praeses* or *legatus proconsulis* in Lycia et Pamphylia, or he at least owned property there. Nummius Albinus (*PIR*² N 229), who dedicated an altar to Iuppiter Serenus in Rome (*CIL* 6.433 = *ILS* 3042, Roma), was also a member of the *gens Nummia Albinia*, but it is uncertain whether he is identical with one of the other Nummii Albini. The same goes for M. Nummius Albinus (*PIR*² N 230), who is mentioned on the epitaph of a female slave (*CIL* 9.4330, Aquila, Italy). By now it has become clear that Nummius Aemilianus Dexter flourished at the end of the fourth century AD. See *PLRE* I, Dexter 1, with further references. Nevertheless, Thomasson (1972–1990), vol. I, 27, no. 195, still assumes that he is identical with Aemilianus, *consul* in 259.

¹³¹ Christol (1986), 215–216, thinks not, because of the age difference. Jacques (1986),

- Perhaps brother of M. Nummius Tuscus, *consul ordinarius* 258.
- Probably the member of the *gens* who died of old age under Aurelianus.¹³²

M. Nummius Tuscus (PIR² N 237)

***Cursus honorum*
Notes**

- *Consul ordinarius* 258 with Mummius Bassus
- Son of M. Nummius Senecio Albinus, *consul ordinarius* 227.
- Perhaps brother of M. Nummius Albinus, *consul II ordinarius* 263.
- Probably father of M. Nummius Tuscus (PIR² N 236), *consul ordinarius* 295.¹³³
- According to SHA, *Aurel.* 13, 1, he visited public baths in Byzantium with emperor Valerianus, *praefectus praetorio* Baebius Macer, and some other people.

The origin of Nummius Umbrius Primus Senecio Albinus is unclear: the family seems to have had property in Brixia (N-Italy) which indicates that Nummius Albinus may have been born there, but he may also have originated from Beneventum (S-Italy, Campania), a city of which he was *patronus*. The fact that the Umbrii Primi from Compsa, the family which had adopted Nummius Albinus, had close connections with the city of Beneventum strengthens the presumption that Nummius Albinus had his origins there. Either way, it is likely that he had Italic roots or was at least strongly connected to cities in Italy.

Senecio Albinus seems to have been the first member of the *gens* to hold a consulship in 206. His colleague was Fulvius Aemilianus, of the *gens Fulvia Aemiliana*. Umbrius Primus, who was probably Senecio Albinus' adoptive father, had been *consul suffectus* ca. 185 / 186 and was *proconsul* of Africa only a few years before his adopted son's consulship.¹³⁴ Since our Senecio Albinus started his career as *triumvir monetalis* and he was both *quaestor* and *praetor* as *candidatus Augusti*, he seems to have had patrician status, which is quite surprising if he was indeed

201, suggests that he was the son of Nummius Umbrius Primus Senecio Albinus, *consul ordinarius* 206.

¹³² Petrus Patricius, Continuator Dio, *Excerpta de Sententiis* 174.

¹³³ This Nummius Tuscus (PIR² N 236) was *consul ordinarius* in 295 with C. Annius Anullinus (PIR² A 632) as his colleague. After 295, he was *curator aquarum et [Miniciae]*, and *praefectus urbi* 302 / 303. See *CIL* 6.31378b = *ILS* 643 (Roma).

¹³⁴ Leunissen (1989), 215–216, dates the proconsulship at ca. 201/202; Settapani (2000), 385, dates it at 204. It has been suggested that Senecio Albinus was *quaestorian legatus* in Africa when his father was governor of this province. On this, see Peachin (1996), 98–100, with further references.

related to Severus' former rival Didius Iulianus and if his father was indeed condemned to death by Severus in 193.¹³⁵ He was even entrusted with a position *cognoscens vice sacra*, judging as deputy of the emperors, perhaps in 208 when Severus and his sons left the capital.¹³⁶

The next member of the Nummii with a consular career was Nummius Senecio Albinus, *consul ordinarius* in 227. He was Senecio Albinus' son and his consular colleague was Laelius (Fulvius?) Maximus Aemilianus, of whom it has been suggested that he was distantly related to the senatorial *gens Fulvia*.¹³⁷

Nummius Albinus was *praefectus urbi* in 256 and again from 261 to 263, and *consul iterum* in 263.¹³⁸ He was perhaps a son of the *consul* of 227, just like Nummius Tuscus, *consul ordinarius* in 258, who—if we may believe the *Historia Augusta*—visited public baths together with the emperor Valerianus.¹³⁹ Tuscus' colleague was Mummius Bassus (*PIR*² M 702), whose family and further career are unknown.¹⁴⁰ Unfortunately, no further information on the careers of these Nummii is available to us. Whether Nummius Faus(t)ianus, *consul ordinarius* in 262 with emperor Gallienus, belonged to the same *gens* cannot be determined.¹⁴¹

The Nummii did not disappear from the consular *fasti* after 284. On the contrary, another Nummius Tuscus, probably the son of the *consul* of 258, was *consul ordinarius* in 295 and city prefect in 302 / 303; several other Nummii held consulates and proconsulships in the course of the fourth century.¹⁴²

¹³⁵ On this, see Alföldy (1968), 129; 138; 148.

¹³⁶ This date is suggested by Peachin (1996), 101.

¹³⁷ See Alföldy (1982), 363.

¹³⁸ The identity of his consular colleague is unclear: two inscriptions read 'Alboni II et Maximo', while all other sources mention Albinus and Dexter as consuls for 263. Confusion with the consuls of 227, Albinus and Maximus, is unlikely, since no inscription of 227 gives an iteration number for Albinus. No other consulship of an Albinus and a Maximus is known. Therefore, the two inscriptions probably belong to 263 (when two *fasti*, Chronogr. a. 354, and *Fasti Heracliani*, give the iteration number of Albinus). Maximus thus seems to have been consul in 263; whether he is identical with Dexter, preceded him or replaced him is uncertain. See *PLRE* I, Maximus 1, with further references.

¹³⁹ *HA, Vita Aurel.*, 13, 1.

¹⁴⁰ See Christol (1986), 99. Dietz (1980), 191, has suggested that this Mummius Bassus may have been related to L. Mummius Felix Cornelianus (*PIR*² M 703), *consul ordinarius* 237, and to L. Mummius Maxi[mus] Fa[us]tinianus (*PIR*² M 706), *vir clarissimus et patricius*, but as far as I can tell the assumption is not supported by any evidence.

¹⁴¹ Christol (1986), 103.

¹⁴² See Settapani (2000), 384–387. Jacques (1986), 170, points out that the Nummii established relations with the *gens C(a)eionia*, which flourished at the end of the third and in most of the fourth century AD.

Table E13. The Pollieni/Pollenii¹⁴³

	(Ti.?) Pollienus Auspex maior (PIR ² P 537)
<i>Cursus honorum</i>	– <i>Consul suffectus</i> 170 / 175 – <i>Legatus Aug pr pr Dalmatiae</i> 173 / 175 – <i>Iudex ex delegatione Caesarum</i> 176 / 180 – <i>Praefectus alimentorum (viarum) Appiae et Flaminiae ter</i> ca. 180 – <i>Proconsul Africae</i> ca. 180 / 200 – (<i>Legatus Moesiae Inferioris??</i> 193 / 197)? ¹⁴⁴
<i>Notes</i>	– Father of (Ti.?) Pollienus Auspex minor, <i>consul suffectus</i> ca. 185? – Probably grandfather of Iulius Pollienus Auspex, <i>consul suffectus</i> 212 / 222.
	(Ti.?) Pollienus Auspex minor (PIR ² P 538)
<i>Cursus honorum</i>	– <i>Consul suffectus</i> before 193?, ca. 185? ¹⁴⁵ – <i>Iudex ex delegatione Caesaris/vice Augg cognoscens</i> 197–202? or ca. 218–219? ¹⁴⁶ – <i>Legatus Aug pr pr Hispaniae Tarraconensis</i> 186 / 189, 193 / 197?, or 222 / 235? – <i>Legatus Aug pr pr Daciae</i> ca. 190 / 192, or 193 / 197?, or 222 / 235? – <i>Legatus Aug pr pr Moesiae Inferioris</i> 193 / 197?, or 222 / 235? – <i>Legatus Aug(g?) pr pr Britanniae</i> ca. 193 / 197?, or 198 / 200, or ca. 230 ¹⁴⁷

¹⁴³ See PIR², pars VI, 235, for a stemma.

¹⁴⁴ As suggested by several scholars. See Peachin (1996), 95, with further references.

¹⁴⁵ Confusion and discussion abound about which positions should be assigned to this man and which to his homonymous father. Here I adopt the opinion of Eck which can be found in *DNP*, vol. 10, s.v. Pollenius. According to him, Pollienus maior (PIR² P 537) was *consul suffectus*, *legatus consularis* of Dalmatia, judge *vice Caesaris*, *praefectus alimentorum viae Appiae et Flaminiae ter* and *proconsul Africae* during the reign of Marcus Aurelius and Commodus (and possibly also *legatus Moesiae Inferioris* under Septimius Severus). He was also the one who was *XVvir sacris faciundis* in AD 204. Pollienus minor (PIR² P 538) was his son and he was also *consul suffectus* and judge *vice Caesaris*. Besides that, he held some positions as governor between 193 and 197 or during the reign of Severus Alexander. For other opinions about their careers, see Leunissen (1989); Peachin (1996), 93–96; Thomasson (1996), 76; Birley (2005), 350. According to PIR² P 538, the start of his career should be dated somewhat earlier, at the end of the reign of Commodus: *consul* ca. 185, governor of Hispania between 186 and 189 and governor of Dacia between 190 and 192.

¹⁴⁶ According to Peachin (1996), 93–96, this position was held during Septimius Severus' absence from Rome between 198 and 202. However, Birley (2005), 350, thinks the tenure of office should be dated ca. 218–219 or even later, during the years from 232 onwards.

¹⁴⁷ According to Birley (2005), 350, Pollienus minor governed Britannia Superior, not

- Notes**
- Son of Pollienus Auspex maior, *consul suffectus* 170/175.
 - Perhaps father of Ti. Iulius Pollienus Auspex (*PIR*² P 539), *consul suffectus* 212/222. It has also been suggested that he may have been identical with Iulius Pollienus Auspex.¹⁴⁸
 - Probably adoptive father of Pollenius Armenius Peregrinus, *consul ordinarius* 244.
- Cursus honorum**
- Ti. Iulius Pollienus Auspex (*PIR*² P 539)**
- *Legatus Aug pr pr Numidiae* 212/222
 - *Consul suffectus (in absentia)* 212/222
- Notes**
- Perhaps the son of Pollienus Auspex minor, *consul suffectus* ca. 185?, or identical with this man.
- Cursus honorum**
- Ti. Pollenius Armenius Peregrinus (*PIR*² P 536)**
- *Proconsul Lyciae et Pamphyliae* ca. 243
 - *Consul ordinarius* 244 with Fulvius Gavius Numisius Aemilianus
 - *Proconsul Asiae??*¹⁴⁹
- Notes**
- Probably son of L. Armenius Peregrinus (*PIR*² A 1059), *praetor* and *frater Arvalis* in 213.
 - Probably adopted shortly after 220 by Pollienus Auspex minor, *consul suffectus* ca. 185?.
 - Perhaps older brother of Armenius Titianus (*PIR*² A 1060), *frater Arvalis* in 240.

The Pollieni (or Pollenii), probably from Italy, reached consular status in the 170s AD when Pollienus Auspex maior was appointed governor of the consular province of Dalmatia under Marcus Aurelius.¹⁵⁰ His homonymous son presumably held a suffect consulship at the end of the reign of Commodus. Both of them served as *iudices ex delegatione Caesaris*, judicial deputies of the emperor in Rome. Pollienus maior seems to have held this position when Marcus and Commodus were fighting the Germans and Sarmatians. When Pollienus minor was *iudex* is subject to debate: it was either under Commodus, during the reign

the undivided province. Furthermore he thinks the position should be dated to the reign of Severus Alexander, circa 230. Eck, *DNP*, vol. 10, s.v. Pollenius, however, argues that the fact that there is no mention of *Inferior* or *Superior* supports the conclusion that this position should be dated between 193 and 197. In *PIR*² P 538 the position in Britain is dated somewhat later, between 198 and 200.

¹⁴⁸ On both suggestions, see *PIR*² P538 with further references.

¹⁴⁹ See Eck (1983), 855.

¹⁵⁰ Provincial origins for the *gens* cannot be excluded. On the subject of their geographical origin, see *PIR*² P 537; Birley (2005), 350–351.

of Septimius Severus, or even under Severus Alexander.¹⁵¹ After his judicial service, the father was *praefectus alimentorum* in Rome thrice and governor of Africa. Perhaps he was also governor of Moesia Inferior at the start of the reign of Septimius Severus. The son was sent to govern several provinces with legions stationed in it. The influential position of Pollienus maior becomes clear from a passage of Dio, which states that Pollienus Sebennus, a nephew of Pollienus maior, was granted mercy through the mediation of his uncle, who apparently even was in a position to mock Septimius Severus at his self-adoption into the house of Marcus Aurelius.¹⁵²

Two more generations of the *gens* appear in the consular *fasti*. Iulius Pollienus Auspex, *consul suffectus in absentia* between 212 and 222, seems to have been Pollienus Auspex minor's son and was probably the adoptive father of Pollenius Armenius Peregrinus, *consul ordinarius* in 244. The latter married a daughter of Flavius Iulius Latronianus, city prefect under Gordianus III. His consular colleague was Fulvius Gavius Numisius Aemilianus, of the *gens Fulvia Aemiliana*.

Thus, the Pollieni belonged to the senatorial inner circle throughout the first half of the third century AD. However, after the 240s they seem to have disappeared from the consular *fasti*. There is no indication that they attained patrician status.

Table E14. The Pomponii¹⁵³

	C. Pomponius Bassus Terentianus (PIR² P 707)
Cursus honorum	– <i>Quaestor provinciae</i>
	– <i>Curator rei publicae [Aq/Ur]vinatum</i>
	– <i>Legatus Aug/Iuridicus per provinciam Hispaniam Citeriorem (?)</i> ca. 185
	– <i>Proconsul Lyciae et Pamphyliae</i> 186 / 187? ¹⁵⁴
	– <i>Legatus Aug pr pr Pannoniae Inferioris</i> 187 / 189?
	– <i>Praefectus aerarii militaris</i> 190?–192?

¹⁵¹ According to Birley (2005), 350, this position should be dated ca. 218–219 or even later, during the years from 232 onwards. Peachin (1996), 93 and 96, however, thinks that Pollienus minor was *iudex* during Septimius Severus' absence from Rome between 198 and 202.

¹⁵² Dio 77, 9, 2–4. Senator Pollienus Sebennus (PIR² P 540) was *aedilis* in 205 and was accused in the senate after his governorship in Noricum (AD 205 / 206) by his successor A. (P. Cadius) Sabinus (PIR² C 571).

¹⁵³ Stemmata appear in PIR², pars VI, 310, and Settapani (2000), 259, but the exact family ties are very uncertain.

¹⁵⁴ Leunissen (1989), 278 and 301.

- Notes**
- *Consul suffectus* ca. 193?¹⁵⁵
 - Probably descendant from T. Pomponius Bassus (*PIR*² P 705), *consul suffectus* 94, of L. Pomponius Bassus (*PIR*² P 704), *consul suffectus* 118, and of L. Pomponius Bassus Cascus Scribonianus (*PIR*² P 706), *consul suffectus* 138 / 143.
 - Probably the father of (Pomponius) Bassus, *consul ordinarius* 211.¹⁵⁶
- Cursus honorum**
- Pomponius Bassus (*PIR*² P 700)**
- *Consul ordinarius* 211 with Terentius Gentianus
 - *Legatus Aug pr pr Moesiae* (*Superioris* or *Inferioris*)?? 212 / 217¹⁵⁷
- Notes**
- Probably son of C. Pomponius Bassus Terentianus, *consul suffectus* ca. 193?.
 - Probably father of the Bassus (*PIR*² P 701) who was his lieutenant when he was governor of Moesia (Dio 79, 21, 2).
 - Killed by Elagabalus ca. 220 (Dio 80, 5, 1–4). Shortly afterwards, the emperor married Bassus' wife Annia Faustina (*PIR*² A 710).
- (Ti./F.) Pomponius Bassus [...]stus (*PIR*² P 702; *PLRE* I, Bassus 17)**
- Cursus honorum**
- *Consul* 245 / 250?, or 259¹⁵⁸
 - *Proconsul* (*Asiae* or *Africae*) ca. 260?¹⁵⁹
 - *Comes Augusti* ca. 268 / 9?
 - *Corrector totius (Italiae?)* 268 / 9?
 - *Praefectus urbi* 270 / 271¹⁶⁰
 - *Consul II ordinarius* 271 with the emperor Aurelianus

¹⁵⁵ Leunissen (1989), 151–152, shows no doubt whether it was this Bassus who was *consul suffectus* in 193. On the identification of *praefectus urbi* Bassus with this man, see Leunissen (1989), 308, note 12. Eck (1971), 747, however, argues that Pomponius Bassus Terentianus cannot be identified with the Bassus who was consul in 193, nor with the *praefectus urbi*, since nothing is known about this man's consulship. It is possible that Pomponius Bassus Terentianus was the Bassus, *amicus Severi*, mentioned by *Epitome de Caesaribus* 20, 6, although this cannot be determined with certainty either.

¹⁵⁶ Leunissen (1989), 373.

¹⁵⁷ It is likely but not entirely certain, that the *consul ordinarius* of 211 is identical to the *legatus Moesiae* mentioned in Dio 79, 21, 2.

¹⁵⁸ *PIR*² P 702 and *PLRE* I, Bassus 17, assume that he was *consul ordinarius* in 259 with Aemilianus, but Christol (1986), 223–224, disagrees and suggests this may be the son of the *consul ordinarius* 259.

¹⁵⁹ From *CIL* 6.3836 = 31747 = *IG* XIV, 1076 = *IGRR* I, 137 (Roma), we know that he was *proconsul*. The province which he governed, however, is unknown. *PLRE* I, Bassus 17, has suggested Africa, but this suggestion cannot be found in Thomasson (1972–1990), vol. I, nor id. (1996).

¹⁶⁰ His name is not mentioned in the Chronogr. a. 354 (ed. Mommsen, *Chronica*

- Notes*
- Probably grandson (or great-grandson) of Pomponius Bassus, *consul ordinarius* 211.¹⁶¹
 - Probably identical with the Bassus who was *princeps senatus* ca. 268 / 270 (*Epitome de Caesaribus* 34, 3).

Pomponius Bassus Terentianus, the first member of the *gens Pomponia* to reach consular status between AD 193 and 284, was a descendant of several *consules suffecti* between late first and mid-second centuries AD. While the *gens* probably had Italic roots, there is no indication that members of it had patrician status.¹⁶² Terentianus may have been the Bassus who is called *amicus Severi* in the *Epitome de Caesaribus*, but besides his consulate, to which he may even have been appointed by Commodus, we do not know of any consular positions held under Severus.¹⁶³

Bassus, *consul ordinarius* in 211, was probably Terentianus' son. His consular colleague was Terentius Gentianus, a member of the *gens Hedia Lolliana*.¹⁶⁴ Only one consular position is known to us: he was governor of Moesia during the reign of Caracalla. He never had the chance to reach the pinnacle of the senatorial career, since Elagabalus killed him ca. 220. Soon afterwards, the emperor took Bassus' wife Annia Faustina as his third wife.¹⁶⁵

The *gens* disappeared from the consular *fasti* for only one generation. Circa 260, Pomponius Bassus . . . stus became *proconsul* of either Asia or Africa. Whether he is identical with the Bassus who was *consul ordinarius* in 259 is not certain, but he must have held a consulate before his proconsular appointment. Later, Bassus . . . stus was both *comes Augusti*, probably under Gallienus, and city prefect under Aurelianus, who was also his consular colleague during his second consulate in 271, by which

Minora I), so he probably held the position briefly within a year; perhaps between Flavius Antiochianus and Postumius Varus in 270, or between Varus and Antiochianus' second term as city prefect in 271. See *PLRE* I, Bassus 17.

¹⁶¹ He either was the son of (Pomponius) Bassus (*PIR*² P 701), *tribunus militum* in Moesia, or the son or grandson of Pomponia Ummidia (*PIR*² P 781), who was a daughter or granddaughter of Pomponius Bassus, *consul ordinarius* 211, and of Annia Faustina. Pomponia Ummidia was the wife of Flavius Antiochianus (*PIR*² F 203), *consul II ordinarius* 270.

¹⁶² On the origin of the *gens*, see Leunissen (1989), 357.

¹⁶³ *Epitome de Caesaribus* 20, 6.

¹⁶⁴ According to Settapani (2000), 259, Bassus and Terentius Gentianus were brothers-in-law.

¹⁶⁵ Dio 80, 5, 1–4.

point he seems to have been *princeps senatus*.¹⁶⁶ Besides this, he was probably related to Flavius Antiochianus, city prefect in 270. No further members of the *gens Pomponia* are known to us after 271.

Table E15. The Postumii¹⁶⁷

	(T. Fl.) Postumius Varus (<i>PIR</i> ² P 900/ <i>PLRE</i> I, Varus 2)
<i>Cursus honorum</i>	– <i>Legatus legionis II Augustae</i> (Britannia) 240 / 250 ¹⁶⁸ – <i>Consul suffectus</i> ca. 250 ¹⁶⁹ – <i>Praefectus urbi</i> 271
<i>Notes</i>	– May have been descendant (great-grandson?) of M. Postumius Festus (<i>PIR</i> ² P 886), <i>consul suffectus</i> 160, and of T. Flavius Titianus, <i>praefectus Aegypti</i> 126–133 (<i>PIR</i> ² F 385; 386). ¹⁷⁰ – Probably related to (brother or uncle?) T. Flavius Postumius Titianus (<i>PIR</i> ² P 899), <i>proconsul Africae</i> 295; <i>consul II ordinarius</i> 301; <i>praefectus urbi</i> in 305–306. ¹⁷¹ – Related to (brother or uncle?) Postumius Quietus (<i>PIR</i> ² P 890), <i>consul ordinarius</i> 272. ¹⁷² – Probably related to Postumius Suagrus, <i>praefectus urbi</i> 275. ¹⁷³ – There may have been another T. Flavius Postumius Varus, who was this man's son. ¹⁷⁴
	(T. Fl.) Postumius Quietus (<i>PIR</i> ² P 890/ <i>PLRE</i> I, Quietus 2)
<i>Cursus honorum</i>	– <i>Quaestor candidatus</i> – <i>Praetor candidatus tutelarius</i> – (<i>Legatus pr pr/proconsulis</i>) Asiae??

¹⁶⁶ *Epitome de Caesaribus* 34, 3.

¹⁶⁷ See Settapani (2000), 373, for a stemma.

¹⁶⁸ The date is based on Christol (1986), 193–194.

¹⁶⁹ Based on an interval of about twenty years between consulate and city prefecture.

See Christol (1986), 194.

¹⁷⁰ Settapani (2000), 371–373, portrays Pomponius Festus was a great man in the age of the Antonines and a friend of Fronto. See Christol (1986), 195 note 6; Birley (2005), 362.

¹⁷¹ According to Christol (1986), 195, it is unlikely that Postumius Titianus was his brother, because of the considerable difference in age. Birley (2005), 362, suggests that Postumius Titianus may also have been his uncle. Settapani (2000–2002), addenda II, 78, holds that Quietus and Postumius Titianus were brothers, based on *CIL* 6.41224 (Roma).

¹⁷² Birley (2005), 362.

¹⁷³ Birley (2005), 362, note 112.

¹⁷⁴ Christol (1989) 195; Settapani (2000), 371–373.

- *Curator rei publicae Aeclanensium (item Oc)riculanorum*
 - *Curator viae [...] et alimentorum*
 - *Consul ordinarius* 272 with (Iunius) Veldumnianus
 - Brother or cousin of Postumius Varus, *consul suffectus* ca. 250.
 - Related to (older brother?) T. Flavius Postumius Titianus, *consul II ordinarius* 301.
 - Related to Postumius Suagr(i)us, *consul suffectus* before 275.
- Postumius Suagr(i)us (PIR² P 896/PLRE I, Suagrus)**
- *Consul suffectus* before 275?
 - *Praefectus urbi* 275
- Cursus honorum**
- Related to Postumius Varus, *consul suffectus* ca. 250; Postumius Quietus, *consul ordinarius* 272; and Postumius Titianus, *consul II ordinarius* 301.
- Notes**

The third-century (Flavii) Postumii may have descended on the one hand from the Numidian orator and philosopher Postumius Festus from Cirta, who was *consul suffectus* in 160, and on the other hand from *eques* Flavius Titianus, governor of Egypt under Hadrianus. Flavius Titianus probably fathered Flavius Claudius Sulpicianus, *consul suffectus* circa 170 and later *proconsul Asiae* (186). Sulpicianus' daughter, Flavia Titiana, was the wife of emperor Pertinax, who appointed his father-in-law as city prefect in 193. It seems that Flavius Sulpicianus was executed in 197, perhaps after he supported Clodius Albinus. Apparently, this did not harm the reputation of his offspring, since his son Flavius Titianus was made *consul suffectus* circa 200. He married Postumia Varia, descendant of Postumius Festus, and the third-century consular Postumii seem to have been their descendants.

Whether Postumius Varus, *consul suffectus* ca. 250 was a patrician cannot be determined, but Postumius Quietus who was both *quaestor* and *praetor* as candidate of the emperor, seems to have had patrician status.¹⁷⁵ After some praetorian curatorships, he finally held an ordinary consulate in 272, the year after Varus held the city prefecture of Rome. Quietus' consular colleague was (Iunius) Veldumnianus, of whom it has been suggested that he was a descendant of the emperor Trebonianus

¹⁷⁵ Christol (1986), 195, note 6, asserts that Postumius Varus was probably not a patrician. The Postumii are not mentioned in the list of patricians of Jacques (1986), 122–123, either.

Gallus.¹⁷⁶ In 275, Postumius Suagr(i)us, another member of the *gens*, was *praefectus urbi*.

Most likely also belonging to the *gens* was the patrician Flavius Postumius Titianus (*PIR*² P 899), *consul iterum* in 301, whose career started at the very end of the period under discussion and whose consular career took place after 284.¹⁷⁷ No members of the *gens* are known to us who held consular positions after Titianus, so the family's glory seems to have peaked in the (second half of the) third century.

Table E16. The Valerii¹⁷⁸

	L. Valerius Messalla Thrasea Priscus (<i>PIR</i> V 95)¹⁷⁹
Cursus honorum	– <i>Consul ordinarius</i> 196 with Domitius Dexter – <i>Curator aquarum</i> ?? ca. 198 ¹⁸⁰
Notes	– May have been a descendant of the old republican and patrician <i>gens</i> of the Valerii Messallae. ¹⁸¹ – Related to (father of?) L. Valerius Messal(l)a Apollinaris, <i>consul ordinarius</i> 214. ¹⁸² – Executed during the sole reign of Caracalla. ¹⁸³
	L. Valerius Messal(l)a Apollinaris (<i>PIR</i> V 86)
Cursus honorum	– <i>Consul ordinarius</i> 214 with C. Octavius Appius Suetrius Sabinus – <i>Proconsul Asiae</i> 236 / 238 ¹⁸⁴
Notes	– Related to (son of?) Valerius Messalla Thrasea Priscus, <i>consul ordinarius</i> 196. – Possibly father of L. Valerius Maximus, <i>consul II ordinarius</i> 256.

¹⁷⁶ It has also been suggested that he descended from a group of Etruscan senators. See *PLRE* I, Varus 3; Christol (1986), 207; Settiani (2000), 355.

¹⁷⁷ Flavius Postumius Titianus was *quaestor candidatus*; *praetor candidatus*; *consul suffectus/adlectus inter consulares* (before 291); *corrector Italiae Transpadanae cognoscens vice sacra/electus ad iudicandas sacras appellationes* (291/2?); *corrector Campaniae* (292/3?); *consularis aquarum et Miniciae*; *proconsul Africae* (295/6); *consul II ordinarius* (301); *praefectus urbi* (305–306). On Titianus' relationship with the other Postumii, see *PLRE* I, Titianus 9 and Christol (1986), 125; 195; 238 with further references.

¹⁷⁸ For stemmata, see Settiani (2000), 224; 240.

¹⁷⁹ Settiani (2000), 220, calls him L. Valerius Messalla Thrasea Paetus.

¹⁸⁰ Leunissen (1989), 316, note 52.

¹⁸¹ Leunissen (1989), 109.

¹⁸² Leunissen (1989), 109.

¹⁸³ Dio 78, 5, 5; Leunissen (1989), 402.

¹⁸⁴ *SEG* 26 (1976–1977) 1261 = *I Eph* 4.1107 (Ephesus). According to Dietz (1980), 247, note 704, this man was identical with Valerius Messalla (Apollinaris?), *consul ordinarius* 214. However, because of the interval of at least 21 years between the consulship and

- L. Valerius Claud(ius) Acilius Priscil(l)ianus [Maximus] (= Valerius Maximus) (PIR V 81 and 84)**
- Cursus honorum**
- *Sevir equitum Romanorum*¹⁸⁵
 - *Triumvir monetalis*
 - *Quaestor (prov. —)*
 - *Quaestor urbanus*
 - *Praetor tutelaris*
 - *Consul ordinarius* 233 with Cornelius Paternus
 - *Curator alvi Tiberis riparum cloacarumque sacrae urbis*¹⁸⁶
 - [*Comes Augg*] of Pupienus
 - *Vigintivir* 238¹⁸⁷
 - *Curator Laurentium Lavinatium*
 - *Praefectus urbi* 255?
 - *Consul II ordinarius* 256? with Acilius Glabrio¹⁸⁸
- Notes**
- Possibly son of L. Valerius Messal(l)a Apollinaris, *consul ordinarius* 214.
 - Probably father of L. Valerius Poplicola Balbinus Maximus, *consul ordinarius* 253.¹⁸⁹
- L. Valerius Poplicola Balbinus Maximus (PIR V 121)**
- Cursus honorum**
- *Sevir equitum Romanorum*¹⁹⁰
 - *Triumvir capitalis*
 - *Quaestor candidatus*
 - *Praetor candidatus tutelaris* before 240¹⁹¹
 - *Legatus (proconsulis) provinciae Asiae*
 - *Curator rei publicae Laurentium Lavinatium item cognoscens ad sacras appellationes* ca. 254 / 260¹⁹²
 - *Consul ordinarius* 253 with Volusianus
 - *Curator aquarum et Miniciae*
 - *Praefectus alimentorum viae Flaminiae*
- Notes**
- Probably son of L. Valerius Maximus, *consul II ordinarius* 256.
 - Probably father of (L. Valerius) Messal(l)a, *consul ordinarius* 280.

the proconsulship, Eck (1977), 231–233, has suggested that the proconsul of Asia was perhaps a younger brother of the *consul ordinarius* of 214 or that the long interval might have been caused by exceptional political circumstances.

¹⁸⁵ See Körner (2002), 255–256, for a recent discussion of his career.

¹⁸⁶ Leunissen (1989), 318.

¹⁸⁷ Dietz (1980), 329–331.

¹⁸⁸ The offices before and after the reign of Philippus Arabs are known to us, but it is noteworthy that we know no details of his career during Philippus' reign.

¹⁸⁹ Körner (2002), 356.

¹⁹⁰ See Peachin (1996), 123–127, for a recent discussion of his career.

¹⁹¹ Peachin (1996), 124.

¹⁹² This date is suggested by Peachin (1996), 124.

(L. Valerius) Messal(l)a (*PIR*² M 506/*PLRE* I, Messalla 1)

- Cursus honorum* – *Consul ordinarius* 280 with (Vettius) Gratus
Notes – Probably grandson of Valerius Messalla Apollinaris, *consul ordinarius* 214.¹⁹³
 – Probably son of L. Valerius Poblecola Balbinus Maximus, *consul ordinarius* 253.¹⁹⁴

The third-century Valerii seem to have had Italic roots.¹⁹⁵ They behaved as if they were descendants of the republican Valerii Maximi. One was even named after the legendary republican consul Valerius Poplicola.¹⁹⁶ If the claim was just, the Valerii belonged to a *gens* which had bred consuls from the republican period into the early Principate. During the early second century not much is heard of the *gens*, but it reappears in the consular *fasti* at the end of the second century AD.

Between AD 193 and 284 five members of the *gens* had consular careers, all holding ordinary consulships. The first to reach a consulship was Valerius Messalla Thrasea Priscus in 196. His colleague was Domitius Dexter, who was *consul iterum* and one of Septimius Severus' loyal supporters. Dexter held the city prefecture from June 193 onward and perhaps still held it during his second consulship. Hardly anything is known about the further career of Thrasea Priscus. From Dio we learn that Priscus was eventually executed during the sole reign of Caracalla.¹⁹⁷

The motive for the execution of Priscus remains unclear, but the emperor's grudge was apparently not aimed at the entire *gens*, since Valerius Messal(l)a Apollinaris, who seems to have been the son of Thrasea Priscus, became *consul ordinarius* in 214. His colleague was Octavius Appius Suetrius Sabinus, who started a senatorial career under Septimius Severus and was imperial *candidatus* for the quaestorship and the tribunate (*tribunatus plebis*). Suetrius Sabinus probably distinguished himself while holding military positions during Caracalla's expedition against the Germans (circa 211–213), first as *legatus legionis* and later as

¹⁹³ Christol (1986), 116; *PLRE* I, Messalla 1.

¹⁹⁴ According to Kreucher (2003), 200, the Messalla who was *consul ordinarius* in 253 cannot be identical with Iunius Messalla who is mentioned in the *Historia Augusta* (*Vita Car.* 20, 4). He argues that the consul of 253 was probably a member of the Valerii Messallae.

¹⁹⁵ Leunissen (1989), 357; 359, suggests that they were from Lavinium (Latium); see also Körner (2002), 356.

¹⁹⁶ Dietz (1980), 246; Jacques (1986), 216; Körner (2002), 356.

¹⁹⁷ Dio 78, 5, 5.

praepositus/dux vexillariis against the Alamanni.¹⁹⁸ After this, Suetrius Sabinus was *comes in expeditione Germanica*, *amicus* of Caracalla and consul.¹⁹⁹ Unfortunately, we are not as well informed on the further career of Valerius Messal(l)a Apollinaris. It is unclear what the course of his career after his consulate was, but it has been suggested that he was *proconsul Africae* circa 236/238.²⁰⁰

Apollinaris' son Valerius Claudius Acilius Priscillianus Maximus reached consular status in 233 under Severus Alexander. His colleague was Cornelius Paternus on whose origin and career we are badly informed.²⁰¹ After his consulate, Valerius Maximus was *curator alvei Tiberis*, and in 238 he was involved in the senatorial revolt. He was *vigintivir* and *comes* of emperor Pupienus.²⁰² Much later, under Valerianus, he was made city prefect of Rome and *consul iterum*. Valerius Maximus' full name leads one to suspect that he was somehow related to the *gens Acilia*.²⁰³ It is noteworthy that his consular colleague in 256 was Acilius Glabrio, a member of this *gens*.

Valerius Maximus may have been the father of Valerius Poplicola Balbinus Maximus, the descendant who was named after Valerius Poplicola. After having been *quaestor* and *praetor* as imperial *candidatus*, and being curator and deputy judge in Italy, he became *consul ordinarius* in 253 with Volusianus Augustus, son of Trebonianus Gallus. The start of his career

¹⁹⁸ See Dietz (1980), 195; Leunissen (1989), 345; 348; Peachin (1996), 106.

¹⁹⁹ Dio 79, 13, 2; Peachin (1996), 103. The fact that Suetrius Sabinus' first consulate was ordinary indicates that the emperor held him in high regard, which also comes into view from the other positions that he held under Caracalla after his consulship. Although his career after the death of Caracalla shows some gaps, he still obtained several important positions, resulting in a second ordinary consulship in 240. Hereby, he became the only person who held a second consulship under Gordianus III.

²⁰⁰ Dietz (1980), 246–248; cf. Settapani (2000), 224.

²⁰¹ Cn. Cornelius Paternus (*PIR*² C 1413) seems to have been *proconsul* of Africa or Asia and *praefectus urbi*, but the positions cannot be dated. See Leunissen (1989), 107, note 26.

²⁰² Dietz (1980), 246, calls him a 'Repräsentant des römischen Uradels in der Opposition gegen Maximinus'. Körner (2002), 191; 194; 356, adds that he certainly belonged to the Italian nobility. Leunissen (1989), 116, suggests that Valerius Maximus may have had role in Gordianus becoming emperor in 238 as well. Jacques (1986), 216, suggests that Valerius Maximus may have been related to the emperor Balbinus, considering the name of his alleged son Valerius Poplicola Balbinus Maximus, *consul ordinarius* in 253.

²⁰³ There are two hypotheses on this relationship: (1) Valerius Messalla Apollinaris was perhaps married to a daughter of M. Acilius Glabrio, *consul II ordinarius* 186, and thus the mother of Valerius Maximus. (2) Apollinaris was married to a daughter of Ti. Claudius Cleobulus and Acilia Frestana, daughter of Acilius Glabrio, *consul II* 186, and Valerius Maximus was thus the grandson of this Acilia and great-grandson of Acilius Glabrio. See Settapani (2000), 227–228 with further references.

suggests that the *gens* had patrician status.²⁰⁴ After his consulship Poblícola Balbinus Maximus remained in Italy and held several offices, though he never reached a proconsulship or a second consulate.

In 280, another Messal(l)a was *consul ordinarius*. Nowadays, it is assumed that he was member of the *gens Valeria*, and probably a son of Poplicola Balbinus Maximus.²⁰⁵ His consular colleague was (Vettius) Gratus, presumably a member of the *gens Vettia*. Nothing further is known about the career of this Messal(l)a.

In the fourth century, the Valerii still appear in the consular *fasti*, but not as frequently and continually as in the third century.²⁰⁶

Table E17. The Vettii²⁰⁷

	C. Vettius Gratus Sabinianus (PIR V 331)
<i>Cursus honorum</i>	– <i>Sevir equitum Romanorum turmae III</i> – <i>Tribunus militum legionis VII Claudiae??</i> ²⁰⁸ – (<i>Quaestor candidatus?</i>) – <i>Praetor candidatus tutelarius</i> – <i>Curator viae Flaminiae et alimentorum</i> – <i>Consul ordinarius</i> 221 with M. Flavius Vitellius Seleucus
<i>Notes</i>	– Grandson or son of C. Vettius Sabinianus Iulius Hospes, <i>consul suffectus</i> ca. 175 / 176, <i>proconsul Africae</i> ca. 190 / 200. ²⁰⁹ – Probably father of Vettius Gratus Atticus Sabinianus, <i>consul ordinarius</i> 242.

²⁰⁴ In view of his career, it is very likely that this Valerius Poblícola Balbinus Maximus had patrician status. According to Leunissen (1989), 378, his father Valerius Maximus was patrician as well.

²⁰⁵ Kreucher (2003), 200.

²⁰⁶ According to *PLRE* I, Maximus 48 signo Basilius, and stemma 30 (p. 1147), the Valerius Maximus (*signo* Basilius) who was *praefectus urbi* 319–323, descended from L. Valerius Poplicola Balbinus Maximus. Other descendants of the *gens* may have been the *proconsul Africae* 319; the *praefectus praetorio* 327–328, *consul* 327; and the (Valerius) Maximus who was *praefectus urbi* 361–362. According to *PLRE* I, Messalla 2, the Messalla who was consular governor of Pannonia Secunda ca. 374 was also presumably a descendant of Messalla, *consul ordinarius* 280. The Messalla who was *praefectus praetorio Italiae* 399–400 may have been his son and thus another descendant of the Valerii. On the fourth-century Valerii, see also Jacques (1986), 217–218.

²⁰⁷ Stemmata can be found in *PIR*, vol. 3, 412, and, more recently, in Dietz (1980), 373, stemma 10 and Settipani (2000), 333–335.

²⁰⁸ *CIL* 8.823 (Africa Proconsularis) mentions a C. Vettius G[ratus Sa]binianus who was *tribunus militum VII Claudiae* and *quaestor candidatus*. According to *PIR* V 330 this man may have been identical with the *consul ordinarius* 221.

²⁰⁹ Jacques (1986), 219; Leunissen (1989), 109.

- C. Vettius Gratus Atticus Sabinianus** (*PIR* V 322; 329)
- Cursus honorum**
- *Quattuorvir viarum curandum/viocurus* ca. 228 / 230²¹⁰
 - *Sevir equitum Romanorum turmae III*
 - *Quaestor candidatus* 234?²¹¹
 - *Praetor candidatus* 239?
 - (*Praefectus frumenti dandi* 240?)??
 - *Curator viae Flaminiae et alimentorum* 241?
 - *Consul ordinarius* 242 with C. Asinius Lepidus Praetextatus
- Notes**
- Probably son of C. Vettius Gratus Sabinianus, *consul ordinarius* 221.²¹²
 - Related to (brother of?) (C.) Vettius Gratus, *consul ordinarius* 250.²¹³
 - Probably the father of (C. Vettius) Gratus, *consul ordinarius* 280.
- (C.) Vettius Gratus** (*PIR* V 328)²¹⁴
- Cursus honorum**
- *Consul ordinarius* 250 with Decius
- Notes**
- Related to (son of?) C. Vettius Gratus Sabinianus, *consul ordinarius* 221.²¹⁵
 - Related to (brother of?) C. Vettius Gratus Sabinianus, *consul ordinarius* 242.
- (C. Vettius) Gratus** (*PIR*² G 227/*PLRE* I, Gratus 1)
- Cursus honorum**
- *Consul ordinarius* 280 with Messal(l)a
- Notes**
- Probably of the *gens Vettia*, and related to C. Vettius Atticus Gratus Sabinianus, *consul ordinarius* 242, and to (C.) Vettius Gratus, *consul ordinarius* 250. He probably was one of them's son.²¹⁶

²¹⁰ See Dietz (1980), 248–251, no. 84, for a discussion of his career.

²¹¹ Dietz (1980), 363.

²¹² Dietz (1980), 363; Leunissen (1989), 468.

²¹³ Dietz (1980), 249.

²¹⁴ According to *PIR*² S 205, he may have been related to Q. Sattius Flavius Vettius Gratus, *consul ordinarius* 250. On Q. Sattius Flavius Vettius Gratus, see also *PLRE* I, Gratus 3, and Kreucher (2003), 200 with further references. This Vettius Gratus restored a *sacrarium* at Rhegium as *corrector (Lucaniae et Bruttii)*, according to *AE* 1923, 61 (Rhegium, Italy). According to *PLRE*, this man lived late third / early fourth century.

²¹⁵ Körner (2002), 199 / 200, note 33.

²¹⁶ Several scholars have argued that this Gratus was related to the Vettii. See *PLRE* I, Gratus 1; Jacques (1986), 219–220; Kreucher (2003), 200. On the family relations, see also Settapani (2000), 332–335 with further references.

The origin of the *gens Vettia* is unknown.²¹⁷ The first Vettius to hold a consulship was Gaius Vettius Sabinianus Iulius Hospes ca. 175/176. Originally an *eques*, he was accepted in the senatorial order by Antoninus Pius. Iulius Hospes was the son-in-law of Servius Cornelius Scipio Salvidienus Orfitus who was consul in 149/150. Although his nuptial bond with the Scipiones may have been relevant for his status as well, it probably was his successes in the battles against the Germans and his help in suppressing usurper Avidius Cassius that motivated Marcus Aurelius to appoint him consul. After his consulship, he served in several militarily relevant provinces, before serving as governor of Africa at the end of Commodus' reign or the beginning of Septimius Severus.²¹⁸ The Vettii seem to have reached patrician status either before the beginning of the third century or circa 220/5.²¹⁹

The first consular member of the family in the third century was Vettius Gratus Sabinianus, *consul ordinarius* in 221. He was the son or, more probably, grandson of Iulius Hospes.²²⁰ His consular colleague was Marcus Flavius Vitellius Seleucus, on whom we are badly informed.²²¹

²¹⁷ According to Leunissen (1989), 366, they were from Africa (Thuburbo Maius), Italy or Narbonensis. Dietz (1980), 262, argues that they may have had relations with the Gordiani, since they certainly had strong connections with Africa, but admits that this is merely a hypothesis. On their origins, see also Körner (2002), 199.

²¹⁸ Iulius Hospes' full career: *praefectus cohortis II Commagenorum* (CIL 3.1619–7854); *tribunus militum legionis I Italicae*; *translatus in amplissimum ordinem ab imperatore divo Tito Antonino* (AE 1920, 45); *quaestor*; *tribunus plebis*; *praetor*; *legatus proconsulis Asiae*; *legatus Aug. ad ordinandos status insularum Cycladum* (special appointment); *iuridicus per tractus Etruriae Aemiliae Liguriae* (under Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus); *legatus legionis III Italicae concordis* (ca. 169); *legatus Aug. rationibus putandis trium Galliarum* (special appointment, in control of the urban finances); *legatus (Aug.) legionis XIV Geminae cum iurisdictione Pannoniae Superioris*; *praefectus aerari Saturni* (in Rome); *legatus Aug. pro praetore Pannoniae Inferioris* (169–175, he took part in battle against Germans; *donis donatus ab imperatore divo Marco Antonino ob expeditionem Germanicam et Sarmaticam*); *praepositus vexillationibus ex Illyrico missis ab eodem imperatore ad tutelam urbis* (175, the year of Avidius Cassius' usurpation); *consul suffectus* (ca. 176); *curator rei publicae Puteolanorum*; *curator aedium sacrarum*; *legatus Augustorum pro praetore Dalmatiae*; *legatus Augg. pro praetore III Daciarum* (ca. 180; Dio 73, 3, 3); *legatus Aug. pro praetore Pannoniae superioris* (ILS 3655); *proconsul Africae* (190/191? or at the beginning of the reign of Septimius Severus).

²¹⁹ Dietz (1980), 249. According to Jacques (1986), 219–223, Vettius Gratus Atticus Sabinianus, *consul ordinarius* 242, was probably of patrician status, but Vettius Gratus Sabinianus, *consul ordinarius* 221, was probably not. He suggests that the *gens* obtained patrician status sometime between ca. 220/225.

²²⁰ Leunissen (1989), 109.

²²¹ Leunissen (1989), 368, mentions he was from the Near East, probably Syria, and states (107, note 26) that nothing is known about this man's ancestry.

That Sabinianus was *quaestor* and *praetor* as imperial candidate points to patrician status. Unfortunately, the consular portion of his career is not known to us. He might have died quite soon after his consulship.

The next consular member of the *gens* was his son, Vettius Atticus Gratus Sabinianus, *consul ordinarius* in 242.²²² His colleague, Gaius Asinius Lepidus Praetextatus (*PIR*² A 1230), may have been the son of Asinius Lepidus, probably *consul suffectus* before 222/226.²²³ It has been suggested that Praetextatus was Sabinianus' brother-in-law.²²⁴ Vettius Gratus, *consul ordinarius* in 250, may have been Sabinianus' brother. He had the honor of having Decius as his consular colleague.

Exactly thirty years later, in 280, another Gratus was *consul ordinarius*. Nowadays it is assumed that he was a member of the *gens Vettia*. He may have been the son of the consul of 242 or the consul of 250.²²⁵ His colleague was Messal(l)a, presumably a member of the *gens Valeria*.

The name 'Vettius' appears in the consular *fasti* until well into the fourth century and even the sixth century AD; the later Vettii may have descended from the third-century Vettii.²²⁶

Table E18. The Virii²²⁷

	(L.?) Virius Lupus (<i>PIR</i> V 479)
<i>Cursus honorum</i>	– <i>Consul suffectus</i> before 196/197
	– <i>Legatus Aug pr pr Germaniae Inferioris (dux?)</i> 196?-February 197
	– <i>Legatus Aug pr pr Britanniae</i> 197–200? ²²⁸

²²² Leunissen (1989), 468.

²²³ Settapani (2000), 337.

²²⁴ Settapani (2000), 337, asserts that Praetextatus' sister was married to Vettius Atticus Gratus Sabinianus.

²²⁵ See *PLRE* I, Gratus 1; Jacques (1986), 219–220; Kreucher (2003), 200.

²²⁶ A Vettius Aquilinus, who seems to have been distantly related through Vettius Sabinianus Iulius Hospes, *consul suffectus* 176, was *consul ordinarius* in 286; C. Vettius Cossinius Rufinus was *praefectus urbi* in 315 and *consul ordinarius* in 316; Vettius Rufinus was *consul ordinarius* in 323; Vettius Iustus was *consul ordinarius* in 328; Vettius Agorius Praetextatus was *praefectus urbi* in 367; and Gabinius Vettius Probianus was *praefectus urbi* in 377. They seem to have descended from Vettius Gratus Atticus Sabinianus, *consul ordinarius* 242. Finally, a Vettius Agorius Basilius Mavortius was *consul ordinarius* in 527. Whether these men were actually descendants or only claimed genetic lineage cannot be established. For *stemmata* and further references, see Settapani (2000), 332–

335.

²²⁷ For *stemmata*, see Dietz (1980), 374, *stemma* 11, and Settapani (2000), 360–362.

²²⁸ These dates are based on Leunissen (1989), *passim*.

- Notes**
- May have been related to Q. Virius Egnatius Sulpicius Priscus (*PIR V 477*), who seems to have been *consul suffectus* during the reign of Septimius Severus or Caracalla.²²⁹
 - Probably father of L. Virius Agricola, *consul ordinarius* 230, and of L. Virius Lupus, *consul ordinarius* 232.²³⁰
- L. Virius Agricola (*PIR V 476*)**
- Cursus honorum**
- *Consul ordinarius* 230 with Sex. Cadius Clementinus Priscillianus
- Notes**
- Probably son of (L.?) Virius Lupus, *consul suffectus* before 196/197.
 - Brother of L. Virius Lupus, *consul ordinarius* 232.
- L. Virius Lupus (Iulianus?) (*PIR V 481*)**
- Cursus honorum**
- *Sevir equitum Romanorum*²³¹
 - *Triumvir capitalis*
 - *Legatus (proconsulis) Lyciae et Pamphyliae*
 - *Allectus inter quaestorios*
 - *Praetor*
 - *Consul ordinarius* 232 with L. Marius Maximus
 - *Legatus Aug Syriae Coelis* ?? 238/244²³²
- Notes**
- Probably son of (L.?) Virius Lupus, *consul suffectus* before 196/197.
 - Brother of L. Virius Agricola, *consul ordinarius* 230.
- Vir(i)us Lupus (*PIR V 480/PLRE I, Lupus 5*)**
- Cursus honorum**
- *Praeses/legatus Aug pr pr Arabiae* before 278; 256/9?²³³
 - *Consul suffectus* before 275; 256/259?
 - *Consularis sacrae urbis regionis II et curator Laurentum Lavinatium*
 - *Consularis regionis II Caelemontium*

²²⁹ He may have been identical with the Sulpicius Priscus who was *proconsul Asiae* during the reign of Severus Alexander, although this man's name may also have been Vibius Sulpicius Priscus. Cf. Thomasson (1972–1990), vol. 1, 235 no. 187. He may have been the uncle of Virius Lupus. On this matter, see Leunissen (1989), 171–172 and 228 with further references. Settiani (2000), 368, calls this man Q. Virius Larcius Sulpicius (Priscus) and links him with Virius Lupus, *suffectus* 196/197, as well.

²³⁰ Birley (1981), 150. According to Jacques (1986), 221, he may also have been their uncle.

²³¹ On his career, see Dietz (1980), 254–256, no. 16.

²³² According to Dietz (1980), 254–256, the Virius Iulianus mentioned on an inscription from Heliopolis (*ILS 9416*) which can be dated during the reign of Gordianus III, who seems to have been *legatus Syriae Coelis*, was probably identical with Virius Lupus, *consul ordinarius* 232. Jacques (1986), 221–222, however, rejects this suggestion.

²³³ On his career and the dates of the positions, see Christol (1986), 263–270, no. 62, and Peachin (1996), 127–129, no. 11.

- *Praeses/legatus Aug pr pr Syriae Coelis* before 278; 259 / 268?
- *Iudex sacrarum cognitionum vice Caesaris per Aegyptum* (or *Asiam*) *et per Orientem* 270 / 5, or 276 / 282
- *Consul* (II?) *ordinarius* 278 with the emperor Probus
- *Praefectus urbi* 278–280
- Notes**
 - May have been the grandson or son of L. Virius Lupus, *consul ordinarius* 232, or the son of Virius Agricola, *consul ordinarius* 230.²³⁴
 - May have been an ancestor of Lupus, *consularis Campaniae* 361 / 3; of Flavius Lupus, *consularis Campaniae* at the end of the 4th century; of Virius Lupus, *proconsul Africae* 337 / 361; and of Virius Lupus *signo Victorius, consularis Campaniae* mid-/end of 4th century.²³⁵
- Cursus honorum** (L.) **Virius Orfitus** (*PIR P 483; PLRE I Orfitus 2*)²³⁶
 - *Consul ordinarius* 270 with Flavius Antiochianus
 - *Praefectus urbi* 273 / 4
- Notes**
 - Probably related to Virius Agricola, *consul ordinarius* 230; to Virius Lupus, *consul ordinarius* 232; and to Virius Lupus, *consul ordinarius* 278. The *cognomen* Orfitus also appears with the Cornelii Scipiones.²³⁷

The geographical origins of the *gens Viria* cannot be established with certainty, but the *gentilicium* is particularly common in northern Italy.²³⁸ The first member of the *gens* to reach consular rank was Virius Lupus, one of the generals who supported Septimius Severus at the beginning

²³⁴ Kreucher (2003), 200, suggests that he was the (grand)son of the consul of 232; according to *PLRE* and Dietz, 374, stemma 11, he was the son of the consul of 232. Christol (1986), 270, only mentions that he may have been a descendant of Virius Lupus, governor of Britannia under Septimius Severus.

²³⁵ According to *PLRE I*, Lupus 5.

²³⁶ According to Christol (1986), 132 and 270–272, there were two Virii Orfiti. He thinks Virius Orfitus maior was *consul suffectus* around 250, *praefectus urbi* in 273 / 274 and *consul II ordinarius* in AD 280. He posits that Virius Orfitus minor, *consul ordinarius* in 270, was his son. Otherwise, Christol claims, the interval between Orfitus' first consulship and his position as *praefectus urbi* would have been remarkably short. The other possibility is that there was only one Orfitus, that his consulship of 270 was a second consulship and that this was not mentioned in the epigraphic evidence. This would be strange as well, according to Christol, since it was quite common in the third century that a second consulship and a position as *praefectus urbi* overlapped.

²³⁷ Christol (1986), 110. *PLRE I*, Orfitus 2, does not mention a relationship with the other Virii.

²³⁸ Birley (1981), 150; Birley (2005), 185. Eck (1985), 188, argues that they may have been from Asia Minor, based on an inscription from Ephesus (*IEph.* 710B).

of his reign. He was probably consular governor of Germania Inferior in 196/197, so he must have held a (suffect) consulship prior to that position. In February 197, Virius Lupus acted as general in a battle against Albinus and was defeated.²³⁹ Immediately after Severus' victory over Albinus and the British army at Lugdunum, Virius Lupus was sent to govern Britannia, a fairly typical sequence of offices.²⁴⁰ The position of the Romans in the north of the province of Britannia was weak when Lupus arrived. Severus would not send anyone to Britannia whom he did not totally trust, especially after the usurpation of Albinus.

General Virius Lupus probably was the father of Lucius Virius Agricola, *consul ordinarius* in 230, and of Lucius Virius Lupus (Iulianus), *consul ordinarius* in 232. The *gens* may have reached patrician status by then.²⁴¹ Agricola's colleague was Sextus Cadius Clementinus Priscillianus, who either was the son of Cadius Lepidus, *consul suffectus* ca. 200, or may have been related to Lucius Cadius Celer, *amicus* of Caracalla, *consul suffectus* ca. 241.²⁴² Virius Lupus (Iulianus)' colleague was Marius Maximus, member of the *gens Maria* and also a descendant of one of Septimius Severus' generals. The consular portion of the careers of these Virii remains unclear to us. According to Jacques, the *gens* attained patrician status circa 240/250, but he presents no argument for his claim.²⁴³

Representing the next generation, Vir(i)us Lupus seems to have been a (grand)son of Agricola or Virius Lupus (Iulianus). He probably held a suffect consulship in the 250s, and was appointed judicial deputy of the emperor, probably in Egypt and the East, during the reign of Aurelianus or Probus. It was probably after that position, at the end of the reign of Probus, that Lupus held two senatorial top positions: a second consulship with Probus as his colleague and the city prefecture of Rome.

²³⁹ Dio 76, 6, 2. Some scholars assume that he was a general with a special command, but Leunissen (1989), 242 f., argues that Dio would not have used the word *stratègos* in that case. Leunissen thinks it is more likely that Virius Lupus acted as governor who commanded the provincial legions.

²⁴⁰ Leunissen (1989), 242.

²⁴¹ Generally, patrician status is ascribed to Virius Lupus, *consul ordinarius* 232. Christol (1986), 133, however, points out that the career of Vir(i)us Lupus, *consul (iterum)* in 278, makes it unlikely to assume that the Virii were patrician at that point. Jacques (1986), 222, thinks that patrician status is improperly ascribed to the consul of 232, but mentions the possibility that Virius Lupus, *consul* in 278, may have belonged to another branch of the *gens*.

²⁴² Dietz (1980), 122 and 355; Leunissen (1989), 374.

²⁴³ Jacques (1986), 122–123.

The last third-century member of the Virii to reach consular rank was Virius Orfitus in 270. Orfitus' colleague was Flavius Antiochianus, who was *consul iterum* in 270 and *praefectus urbi* at the same time. Antiochianus was married to Pomponia Ummidia, member of the *gens Pomponia*.²⁴⁴ Orfitus also held the city prefecture in 273 / 4.

Although these third-century Virii probably were ancestors of *virii consulares* of the fourth century, the *gens* seems to have reached its prime in the third century.²⁴⁵

²⁴⁴ Christol (1986), 110 and 193.

²⁴⁵ A Virius Lupus (*PLRE* I, Lupus 6) was *proconsul Africae* between 337 and 361, and some others are mentioned as *consulares*. On the Virii after 284, see Jacques (1986), 222–223.

CHAPTER THREE

PRAETORIAN PREFECTS AND OTHER HIGH-RANKING EQUESTRIANS

In the past, scholars have perceived a rise of the *equites* during the third century AD.¹ However, this view is problematic in more than one way. Already in the high Principate—from the Flavian to the Antonine emperors—the equestrian *ordo* was an even more heterogeneous group than the higher-ranking *ordo senatorius*. Within the political system, the most significant subset of *equites* contained those who served as equestrian officers in the army and senior civil administrators.² Junior *equites* served as *tribuni militum* of legions and as *praefecti* of cohorts and cavalry units. Each year about 360 posts were available for senior officers of equestrian rank. These military officer-posts were a necessary hurdle for advancement to senior civil-administrative positions.³ Later, from the second century AD, the post of *advocatus fisci* became an alternative precursor.⁴ Later in their careers, *equites* could serve as provincial *procuratores*, who were responsible for financial administration and sometimes military logistics, and supervised freedmen procurators who themselves administered imperial properties in their provinces. Furthermore, *equites* could be governors of minor provinces or imperial secretaries at court.

¹ The notion of the rise of the *equites* was defined by Keyes (1915). Cf. Stein (1963), 444–459; Rémondon (1970), 100–101; Alföldy (1988), 193.

² Millar (1992), 279–290, for instance, identifies three subsets within the *ordo*: (1) holders of the public horse, (2) jurors at Rome, and (3) military and civilian office-holders. For the purpose of this study I will focus only on the senior members of the last subset, as this group constituted, along with senior senators, the political elite of the Empire. It should be noted, however, that only a minority of the *equites* belonged to this subset of office-holders.

³ Equestrian men usually started their career by filling a sequence of military posts (the so-called *tres* or *quattuor militiae*, depending on the number of positions). From the end of the Julio-Claudian period the usual sequence of the *tres militiae* was *praefectus cohortis*—*tribunus militum*—*praefectus alae*. See Devijver (1989), 16–28; 56–72; and Dobson (1979).

⁴ The *advocati fisci*, employed by Hadrianus (*HA, Vita Hadr.* 20, 6), represented the *fiscus* (imperial treasury) in court (cf. for instance *Digesta* 28, 4, 3) and apparently acted as legal authorities. On the *advocatus fisci*, see also Crook (1995), 52–53.

Exceptionally successful *equites* could eventually reach the high prefectures which formed the zenith of the equestrian career: the *praefectura annonae*, the *praefectura Aegypti* or even the *praefectura praetorio*. In due course, the senior equestrian posts were qualified hierarchically by salary level; in that way an equestrian career developed by analogy with the senatorial *cursus honorum*.⁵ The equestrian career pattern, however, was never as strict as the senatorial one.

In the high Principate, most of the equestrians were landed gentry, but a minority consisted of ranking soldiers who had acquired equestrian status after holding the post of *primuspilus* (senior centurion of a legion). Because the *ordo equester* was more accessible to newcomers than the *ordo senatorius*, the equestrian order included far more members than the senatorial.⁶ And just as entry into the equestrian order was a personal honor bestowed by the emperor and not hereditary, so also ambitious *equites* who caught the attention of the emperor or one of his advisers could be promoted, or have their sons promoted, to senatorial rank through *adlectio*. By this process, the number of *homines novi* within the senate steadily increased during the first and second centuries AD.⁷

The heterogeneous character of the *ordo equester* in imperial times also emerges in the way the *ordo* has been dealt with in scholarly discussion: much effort has been made to collect the scattered evidence, which has led to a number of works that treat certain aspects of the equestrian career and the *ordo equester*, but books on the order as a whole are rare and have not been written recently.⁸ Besides the inherently heterogeneous charac-

⁵ Salary levels of 60,000 (*sexagenarii*), 100,000 (*centenarii*), 200,000 (*ducenarii*), and 300,000 (*trecenarii*) HS were the basis of distinctions. Career inscriptions of *equites* use these descriptions as titles.

⁶ Strabo, *Geographica* 3, 5, 3; 5, 1, 7, informs us that under Augustus 500 *equites* lived in Gades (Spain) and Patavium (Italy) respectively. According to Heil (2008b), 743, each generation of *equites* contained about 20,000 *equites* against circa 600 senators. Although these numbers may have changed after the Augustan era, the ratio of *equites* to senators will probably have remained fairly constant in the high Principate.

⁷ See most recently Heil (2008b), 740–744, on the development of the *equester ordo* in the first and second centuries.

⁸ The syntheses of Keyes (1915) and Stein (1927, second edition 1963) are outdated, but have not been replaced by more modern works. The amount of prosopographical research on specific aspects of the equestrian career is immense. See, for example, Pflaum (1950); id. (1960–1961); Devijver (1976–2001); id. (1989); id. (1992). Demougin (1988) focuses on the Julio-Claudian period only. Demougin-Devijver-Raepsaet-Charlier (1999) collects articles focusing on aspects of the order throughout several centuries, but does not amount to a history of the order as a whole either. Some articles sketch the broader outlines of the order and its role in imperial administration. See, for instance,

ter of the order and the scattered evidence—which becomes ever more scanty in the course of the third century—there is another complicating factor: the *equester ordo* of the high Principate was a completely different group of people than the equestrian order of the late third century.

Hence, instead of speaking of a rise of the *equites* in general, it is better to first sort out in detail which equestrians saw their power increase in the very top of Roman imperial administration, where status and power had been steadily highest. Therefore, this chapter will start by focusing on the increasing authority that high-ranking equestrians acquired in the third century. For the sake of clarity this discussion is divided into three categories: (1) *equites* as provincial governors, (2) *equites* involved in warfare and military logistics, and (3) *equites* as imperial secretaries. Thereupon, I will briefly discuss whether the growing power had consequences for the status of those high-ranking equestrians involved. In the second part of this chapter, a case study on the praetorian prefects in the third century serves to further display and illustrate the developing position of (at least some of the) high equestrians in this period. As will become clear, the changing position of high-ranking equestrians as a group cannot be dissociated from their changing composition between AD 193 and 284.

3.1. *The Increasing Responsibilities of High Equestrians in Imperial Administration*

Equites as Provincial Governors

When Septimius Severus incorporated the northern part of Mesopotamia and organized it as a Roman province in the 190s, the emperor appointed an equestrian *praefectus* to govern the area.⁹ In itself this was not a novelty. From the early Principate onward, a number of provinces were put in the hands of equestrian governors.¹⁰ The province of Egypt,

Saller (1980); Alföldy (1981); Brunt (1983). For a recent discussion, see Heil (2008b), with further references to previous studies at 738–740.

⁹ On the prefects of Mesopotamia in the third century, see Magioncalda (1982).

¹⁰ Alpes Maritimae, Alpes Cottiae, and Alpes Poeninae, three small provinces straddling the Alps, for instance, were governed by equestrians, as well as Mauretania Caesariensis and Mauretania Tingitana from the province's division in the first century. Raetia, Noricum, and Thracia were originally also governed by equestrian *procuratores Augusti*, but eventually transferred to senatorial *legati Augusti pro praetore*. On the names and ranks of the governors of these provinces and for further references, see Thomasson (1972–1990), vol. I, 63–68 (Alpes); 77–86 (Raetia and Noricum); 161–178 (Thracia); 409–418 (Mauretaniae). From time to time, Judaea/Syria Palaestina was of course also

run by an equestrian *praefectus*, was of course the most renowned example and it paralleled Mesopotamia as it was the only other equestrian-governed province with legions stationed in it.¹¹

Furthermore, from the Severan era onward, the number of cases in which senatorial governors were replaced by equestrian *agentes vice praesidis* increased. This trend continued and even intensified from 240 onward. The fact that *agens v(ice) p(raesidis)* was soon abbreviated as *a.v.p.* in inscriptions indicates that the Empire's inhabitants 'rapidly became familiar enough with the phenomenon'.¹² Equestrians had replaced senatorial governors in the first and second centuries as well, but only in exceptional cases, when a governor had died or had been dismissed. Those appointments had been temporary and lasted only until a new senatorial governor had been selected. Yet from the reign of Severus Alexander some areas, for instance Dacia, were so frequently governed by equestrian *agentes vice praesidis* that it is unlikely that all these men were appointed only as interim governors. The high number of *agentes vice praesidis* suggests that the practice lost its improvised character and that the emperors used these appointments as a way to assign certain provinces to equestrian governors without formally adjusting the institutions of provincial administration.

Illustrative of this development is the career of Timesitheus. Before he became praetorian prefect under Gordianus III, Timesitheus had gone through a long career with several appointments as deputy governor (*agens vice*). Under Elagabalus Timesitheus was *procurator* in Arabia serving as an *agens vice praesidis* twice. Under Severus Alexander he was *agens vice praesidis* of the province of Germania Inferior, while simultaneously holding a position as *agens vice procuratoris* of the imperial properties in Belgica, Germania Superior and Germania Inferior. That the emperor was fighting Germanic invaders in the Rhine area in those years (AD 233 / 234) bolsters the significance of these positions. Pflaum argued

governed by equestrians, but this province is notorious as it shifted from being ruled by friendly kings to being ruled by Romans, and as it was strongly dominated by the governor of Syria. On Judaea, see Goodman (2000).

¹¹ The literature on the administration of Egypt is immense. On the *praefecti* governing Egypt, see, for example, Reinmuth (1935); Stein (1950); Brunt (1975); Bastianini (1988); Bureth (1988); Jördens (2009); on Roman imperial power in Egypt in the third century, see De Jong (2006).

¹² Peachin (1996), 156. Cf. *CIL* 3.1625 (Dacia), which can be dated in the reign of Septimius Severus, with the description *agens v(ice) p(raesidis)*, and *CIL* 3.1464 = *ILS* 1370 (Dacia), probably to be dated in Caracalla's reign, which yields the abbreviation *a.v.p.*

that appointing Timesitheus *agens vice procuratoris* was just a necessary step to allow him to also become deputy governor of Germania Inferior and thus commander of the two legions stationed in this province.¹³ But moreover, Timesitheus' combining the governorship with his position as *procurator* of the Rhineland's imperial domains—a position normally assigned to freedman *procuratores*—simplified logistics: the dual authority enabled Timesitheus both to collect the resources required for wars against the invading tribes and to direct the battles.¹⁴ According to Pflaum, Timesitheus was subsequently *procurator* of the imperial properties and simultaneously *agens vice praesidis* in Bithynia et Pontus, including Paphlagonia, and finally *procurator* and *vice proconsulis* in the province of Asia under Maximinus Thrax. In Asia, Timesitheus may have replaced *proconsul* Valerius Messalla Apollinaris (see Chapter 2), the father of Valerius Maximus, who has been identified as one of the *vigintiviri* of the year 238. If true, this may have indicated that the policy of replacing senatorial governors had negatively affected the position of the senatorial elite discussed in Chapter 2. The lacunae in the *fasti* of the provincial governors, however, do not allow us to test this hypothesis with a convincing amount of evidence. Being appointed as four different *agentes vice*, Timesitheus may not have been representative of a typical *eques* replacing senatorial governors, as he obviously was an exceptionally successful member of the equestrian order. Yet Timesitheus' career indicates how continuous accumulation of basically equestrian positions could consolidate a senatorial governor's level of power (or even higher) for an *eques*.¹⁵

Under Gallienus in the 260s, the process of replacing senatorial governors by equestrian men continued and seems to have extended further: the available evidence reveals that there were relatively more *agentes vice praesidis* in comparison with the late Severan era. From Gallienus' reign onward some provinces, like Arabia, Macedonia and Numidia,

¹³ For an overview of Timesitheus' career, see Pflaum (1960–1961), vol. 2, 816, no. 317.

¹⁴ On freedmen as *procuratores* of imperial domains, see Weaver (1972), 267–281.

¹⁵ Petersen (1955), 47, who claims that the cumulation of vicariates in Timesitheus' career does not indicate imperial policy, but that he was entrusted with many vicariates because he was closely related to Gordianus III, obviously did not take into account that these replacements were held under Gordianus III's predecessors, Elagabalus, Severus Alexander and Maximinus Thrax. Other examples of *equites* who functioned *vice praesidis* can be found in the lists of Pflaum (1950), 134–136; Rémy (1976), 466–470; Peachin (1996), appendix 4, 229–238. See also Malcus (1969), 217–223, on equestrian *agentes vice praesides*, and most recently Heil (2008b), 750–751, for further references and examples of the trend.

were almost continuously governed by equestrian men, who were still called (*procuratores*) *agens vice praesidis* and thus officially still acted as deputies of senatorial governors.¹⁶ Yet the change was not executed systematically; senatorial governors were not ousted by *equites* everywhere. Even after 260, senatorial men crop up among provincial governors, especially in senatorial consular provinces which were not struck by long-term crisis like Africa and Asia, but also in imperial provinces such as Hispania Tarraconensis and areas in the Balkans, as has been discussed in Chapter 2.¹⁷

The emperors after Gallienus did not reverse the process either. On the contrary, they even enlarged the proportion of provinces governed by equestrians.¹⁸ The fact that most of these emperors originated themselves from the *ordo equester*, as discussed in Chapter 1, must have boosted this trend. Eventually, the *agentes vice praesidis* became so common that they were simply referred to as *praesides*. In areas which experienced frequent internal or external military crises, the equestrian *praesides* probably carried out mainly civil-administrative and judicial tasks; the military responsibilities of these regions went increasingly into the hands of *duces* and *praepositi*, as will be discussed below. In other regions, however, maintaining order may have belonged within the range of duties of the *praeses*. Zosimus tells of bands of robbers led by a certain Lydius the Isaurian, who were active in Lycia et Pamphylia during Probus' reign. The emperor sent as *praeses* to this area *eques* Terentius Marcianus. There is a fair chance that he was the Roman general, referred to by Zosimus (1, 70, 4: Gr. τοῦ τῆς στρατείας ἡγουμένου), who was assigned specifically to this problem. The possibility that Marcianus served as military officer in the area, before he was promoted to the position of *praeses*, cannot be excluded.¹⁹

¹⁶ The province of Numidia, created under Septimius Severus, was initially governed by a senatorial *legatus pro praetore*. He was replaced by an equestrian governor under Gallienus. On the provincial administration in Numidia from Septimius Severus to Gallienus, see Le Glay (1991).

¹⁷ On the process in the 260s and for examples and further references, see Heil (2008b), 757–758.

¹⁸ Kreucher (2003), 202–212, describes the situation at the end of the period under discussion. The table at p. 211, clearly shows that equestrian governors prevailed under Probus, but that senators were not entirely displaced as governors. Cf. Glas-Hartmann (2008), 669.

¹⁹ On Lydius, see Zosimus 1, 69–70; On Terentius Marcianus, see *AE* 1995, 1541 (Pisidia). On Lydius and Terentius Marcianus' role in Lycia et Pamphylia, see Kreucher (2003), 150–155, with further references.

Very little can be said about the origin and previous careers of the *agentes vice praesidis* and *praesides*, as the rise of these men coincided with a numerical and qualitative decline of extensive career inscriptions. Their names indicate that their families did not belong to any groups which had been involved very long in imperial administration, and that some of these men even belonged to families which had only been granted Roman citizenship in the course of the third century. Some of them were social upstarts who had risen from the corps of officers, like Aelius Aelianus, *praefectus legionis* under Gallienus, who became *praeses* of Mauretania Caesariensis in the 270s.²⁰ Aurelius Marcianus, *dux* under Gallienus, who fought the Goths in the Balkans and became *praeses Dalmatiae* under Probus, is another example.²¹ In some cases, the appointed *praeses* was already present in the area, serving as an officer before being promoted.²² Experience in the military and logistic sphere was apparently a good reason to appoint a man *praeses*, yet there may also have been *equites* with a civil career who were made *praesides*, especially if immediate availability was a decisive factor in appointments. The evidence is just too fragmentary to exclude men with financial or legal backgrounds, or to draw more specific conclusions on the previous careers of the *praesides* in general.

By the end of our period, in the 270s and early 280s, equestrians were administering a considerable number of provinces. This development described above certainly bolstered the status of those *equites* who

²⁰ If the Aelius Aelianus mentioned in *CIL* 3.3529 (Pannonia Inferior) and *AE* 1965, 9 (Pannonia Inferior), is indeed identical with the one mentioned in *CIL* 8.21486 = *ILS* 4495 (Mauretania Caesariensis), as has been assumed in Dobson (1978), 312, no. 220. Cf. *PLRE* I, Aelianus 8 and 10; Pflaum (1960–1961), vol. 2, 948–952, no. 357. On Aelius Aelianus, see also Chapter 4, section 4.2.

²¹ If the Marcianus praised in *AE* 1965, 114 (Thracia) and mentioned in *HA, Vita Gall.* 6, 1, is identical with the man mentioned in *CIL* 3.8707 (Dalmatia). See *PLRE* I, Marcianus 2 and 18. Dobson (1978), 320, no. 230, discusses an Aurelius Marcianus, referred to in *CIL* 6.2487 (Roma), who was *primuspilus cohortis III Pretoria*. He may have been identical with the Marcianus, *dux* under Gallienus and *praeses* in Dalmatia, as well. Although Dobson assumes that the inscription dates to the third century, he does not mention the possibility that these men may have been identical. For further examples of men who had risen from military ranks and eventually became *praeses*, see Heil (2008b), 759, note 89. On Marcianus, see also Chapter 4 below, section 4.2.

²² For example Statilius Ammianus (*CIL* 3.90; *IGRR* 3.1287 (Arabia); *PLRE* I, Ammianus 5), who was *praefectus alae* circa 253/256 and *agens vice praesidis Arabiae* in 262/263. Another example is M. Aurelius Valentinus in Macedonia (*AE* 1900, 169, Macedonia; *PLRE* I, Valentinus 8), who was *tribunus* and *agens vice praesidis* in 276. Cf. Heil (2008b), 759. As said above, this may also have been the case with Terentius Marcianus in Lycia et Pamphylia under Probus.

were involved in provincial administration: their tasks were no longer restricted to specific regions or traditional tasks, for they could now be deployed anywhere the emperor needed them. Furthermore, the possibilities for them to become provincial governors increased, whereby they gained influence in the civil-administrative sphere.

Equites Involved in Warfare and Military Logistics

Septimius Severus not only assigned the province of Mesopotamia to an equestrian governor, but put the newly created *legiones Parthicae* under the command of equestrian *praefecti* as well.²³ Moreover, the trend toward substituting senators with *equites*, which could be detected among the third-century provincial governors, also surfaces among military officers. The command of *vexillationes* and other temporary army units—the deployment of which grew significantly in the third century, as flexibility became more crucial and the complete legions were mobilized less often—went increasingly into the hands of capable equestrian *duces* or *praepositi*.²⁴ Septimius Severus still assigned most of these temporary units to senatorial commanders, albeit often *homines novi* and thus first generation senators. The expeditionary forces of Caracalla and Severus Alexander, however, included significantly fewer senatorial commanders, and under Gallienus practically all high commands went to equestrians, as will be discussed in Chapter 4.

Yet until the 250s, senators were still appointed to relevant military posts. Great regional commands, which were created from the 240s onward to defend the borders and maintain order in specific areas, went to both senators and *equites*. For example, Priscus held such a supra-provincial command in the East under Philippus Arabs, while maintaining equestrian status, while Cornelius Octavianus, who was initially equestrian *praeses* in Mauretania Caesariensis, was promoted to the position of *dux per Africam Numidiam Mauretaniamque* to defend the African *limes* against invading tribes in the 250s. On the other hand, the fact that Decius, who had gone through a traditional senatorial career, commanded the united troops of Moesia and Pannonia under Philippus

²³ Smith (1972). On the increasing number and significance of equestrian positions under Septimius Severus and his successors, see also Coriat (1978); Birley (1988), 195–196. Cf. Campbell (2005a), 12–13, who points out that two of the newly created legions were stationed in Mesopotamia, which had an equestrian governor, ‘and a senator could not be asked to serve under an *eques*’.

²⁴ On *vexillationes*, see Saxer (1967); on *duces* and *praepositi*, see Smith (1979).

Arabs shows that senators still received such military assignments in the 240s as well. To what extent such commands included non-military tasks remains unclear.²⁵

By the sole reign of Gallienus, senatorial *tribuni militum* were no longer attested and the practice of replacing senatorial *legati legionis* with equestrian *praefecti legionis* had become widespread. These equestrian legionary commanders were originally called *praefecti legionis agentes vice legati* and thus presented as deputies of senatorial commanders. Later, the title was abbreviated to *praefecti (castrorum) legionis*.²⁶ The development seems to have been analogous to the multiplication of *agentes vice praesidis*, who were eventually simply called *praesides*. High military commands in regions continuously struck by internal or external military crises went by then only to equestrians with considerable military or logistical experience, who then often bore the title *dux*. Whereas the supra-provincial commanders appointed in the 240s and 250s may have had civil-administrative duties as well, these *duces* do not seem to have been responsible for non-military matters within the provinces

²⁵ Cf. Glas-Hartmann (2008), 654, who claim that such supra-provincial commands included both civil and military authorities and were initially given mainly to senators. However, in Decius' case it is unclear whether he also acted as governor of the Moesian and Pannonian provinces. Zosimus 1, 21, 2, only refers to the command of the legions. On Decius' command in the Danube area, see also *PIR*² M 520; Huttner (2008), 201–202; Johne-Hartmann-Gerhardt (2008), 1162, with further references. The same lack of clarity applies to the exact range of duties of Decius' predecessor Ti. Cl. Marinus Pacatianus (*PIR*² C 930; cf. P 6). It has been assumed that he was the son of a senator, but his senatorial status has been disputed. On Pacatianus, see Huttner (2008), 199–200, and Glas-Hartmann (2008), 655, with additional references. For more information on Priscus' command in the East and further references, see *PIR*² I 488; Körner (2002), 366–367; Johne-Hartmann-Gerhardt (2008), 1178–1179. On M. Cornelius Octavianus, see *PIR*² C 1408; Glas-Hartmann (2008), 658; Johne-Hartmann-Gerhardt (2008), 1139, with further references.

²⁶ For example P. Aelius Aelianus (*AE* 1965, 9; *CIL* 3.3529) *praefectus legionis (agens vice legati) II Adiutricis*; Valerius Marcellinus (*CIL* 3.3424 = *ILS* 545, Pannonia Inferior) *praefectus legionis agens vice legati II Adiutricis*; Aurelius Frontinus (*CIL* 3.3525 = *CIL* 3.10492 = *ILS* 2457) *praefectus legionis*, all in Pannonia Inferior under Gallienus; Cl. Aurelius Superinus (*CIL* 3.4289 = *ILS* 3656) *praefectus legionis agens vice legati* in Pannonia Superior under Claudius Gothicus; cf. Aurelius Montanus (*CIL* 3.14359, 27 = *ILS* 9268) *vices agens legati legionis* in Pannonia Superior, and Aelius Paternianus (*CIL* 3.3469) *praefectus legionis agens vice legati* in Pannonia Inferior in the early 280s. Cf. Christol (1982), 147. The title *praefectus legionis vice legati* was first attested under Severus Alexander for a commander of *Legio II Parthica* called Licinius Hierocles (*ILS* 1356, Mauretania Caesariensis). On the *praefecti legionis*, see also Malcus (1969), 228–230.

assigned to them.²⁷ Thus, in the 260s, senators no longer held high positions in the military bureaucracy. According to Aurelius Victor, the emperor Gallienus even issued an official edict forbidding senators to take military commands.²⁸ The question whether there actually was such a decree has provoked extensive scholarly discussion. Indeed, military tribunates and legionary commands disappeared from senatorial career inscriptions, and senatorial governors of provinces with relevant troops or legions stationed in it had become rare from the 240s onwards, as observed in Chapter 2.²⁹ Whether there actually was an edict or not,—and in fact Aurelius Victor’s statement is the only evidence for its existence—, the available sources indicate that at this point Gallienus rather formalized what had gradually become common practice than that he came up with deviant appointment policies and radical reforms.³⁰

At other points, Gallienus’ reorganizations of military structures seem to have been more radical. He created special military units, which were independent of the legions and directly linked to the emperor in person. These units could be moved around easily and could therefore be mobilized as an intervention force. The high percentage of cavalry guaranteed that this army could swiftly track down and destroy small looting groups or enemies who had dispersed for logistical reasons. Whether this army was a temporary unit which was made permanent, or a permanently available imperial expeditionary army, is unclear. Its command was held by a powerful equestrian commander, as Chapter 4 will discuss further. The *vexillationes* seem also to have attained permanent status by the reign of Gallienus. Due to continuous fighting, they were no longer called up *ad hoc* for specific purposes and then sent back to their original units, but served continuously in the new imperial reserve army on various fronts.³¹ Strategically important places, such as Milan and Aquileia in northern Italy, and towns in northern Gallia and the Danube area and even Asia Minor, were fortified and defended by new garrisons, whose soldiers were detached from various legions and put under the command of equestrian *duces* as well. All these measures amounted to a much more

²⁷ On the *duces* under Gallienus and their responsibilities, see Chapter 4 of this study.

²⁸ Aurelius Victor, *Liber de Caesaribus*, 33, 33–34; 37, 5–6.

²⁹ This was first observed by Pflaum (1976). Cf. Christol (1986), 39–44; Heil (2008b), 754; Hekster (2008), 41, supplying further references and examples.

³⁰ Cosme (2007) summarizes the scholarly debate on the ‘edict’.

³¹ For example, L. Flavius Aper, who was *praepositus (vexillationum) legionum V Macedonicae et XIII Geminae Gallienarum* (AE 1936, 53–54, 57, Pannonia Superior). Cf. Saxer (1967), 56–57.

flexible system of defense, foreshadowing defense methods of the later Roman Empire.³²

The continual internal and external threats also affected the position of *equites* in offices that oversaw military logistics, especially from the 250s onwards. How material resources were deployed to provision the Roman armies, in the form of taxes in money and kind, is a complex matter which is still subject to debate. One complicating factor is that the Roman Empire never developed a uniform and universally applied military supply system.³³ Here, the subject can only be touched on briefly, focusing on the role of high *equites* within logistics and how third-century events impacted their level of power.

One of the key figures in wartime logistics was the *a rationibus* (head of the central administration of the emperor's finances) who, after an emperor had decided to wage a war, handled the finances for the forthcoming campaign. A remarkable series of men with full military and civilian equestrian careers held the office of *a rationibus*, and several of them even ascended from below the equestrian order, from the rank of senior centurion.³⁴ Furthermore, the office of the *annonae* helped to plan, organize, and supervise the collection and transportation of grain. Its equestrian *praefectus* presumably had to coordinate all relevant supply efforts with the *a vehiculis* or the *praefecti vehiculorum*, supervisors of the imperial posting-system and in charge of provincial roads.³⁵ Army supply depended highly on requisitions. According to the *Historia Augusta*, Severus Alexander made such careful provision for the

³² De Blois (1976), 30–34; Simon (1980); Potter (2004), 257–258; Campbell (2005b), 115; Strobel (2007).

³³ On logistics in the Roman Empire and for further references, see Roth (1999) and Kehne (2007). On logistics and supply in the Republican era, see Erdkamp (1998).

³⁴ Millar (1992), 105–106, who points out that many of the *a rationibus* held procuratorships in Gallia before being *a rationibus*. Contrary to Eck (2000), 240, who includes the *a rationibus* among the *officia Palatina*, Millar explicitly distinguishes the post of *a rationibus* from the secretarial posts on the grounds that the *a rationibus* did not work closely with the emperor, did not (usually) attend him or travel with him, or act as the emperor's adviser, but instead operated independently of the emperor and at a distance from him.

³⁵ The *praefectus vehiculorum* was head of the *cursus publicus*, arranging the transmission of messages or transportation on behalf of public institutions (officials, military, and goods). See Kolb (2000), 159–166. In due course, the administration of the *annona militaris*, a special tax presumably raised by Septimius Severus for the benefit of the army, was transferred to the praetorian prefects. Most scholars, however, accept that this transfer took place after AD 284. See also below (section 3.3), on this matter, with further references.

soldiers that they received supplies at each halting-place. The text even refers to a proclamation which was allegedly issued by Severus Alexander, in which the emperor demanded that his army be supplied along the line as it marched. Although the *Vita Severi Alexandri* probably reflects what was considered to be proper imperial behavior in the late fourth century, it is not unlikely that such provisions were made by third-century emperors:

He always kept secret the plan for a campaign, but announced openly the length of each day's march; and he would even issue a proclamation two months beforehand, in which was written, "On such and such a day, and at such and such an hour, I shall depart from the city, and if the gods so will, I shall tarry at the first halting-place." Then were listed in order all the halting-places, next the camping-stations, and next the places where provisions were to be found, for the whole length of the march as far as the boundaries of the barbarians' country.³⁶

Other responsibilities in military logistics went to the *ab epistulis* (head of the office controlling the emperor's correspondence), who sent out demands to allies for supplies and recommended qualified officers or prefects for special posts, like the *praepositus annonae expeditionis*.³⁷ Such extraordinary commands remained limited in time and restricted to a specific task. Tiberius Claudius Candidus, for example, functioned as *praepositus copiarum* in the second Marcomannic war of Marcus Aurelius.³⁸ One Rossius Vitulus was *praepositus annonae* during Septimius Severus' expedition to Rome, *procurator arcae expeditionalis* (dispensing the expeditionary treasure chest) in the war against Niger, and subsequently appointed as *procurator annonae* for the *expeditio Gallica* in 196.³⁹ At the corps level, *primipili* of the expeditionary forces were responsible for army supplies. *Primipili* were also assigned to logistical duties like supervising the overseas supply lines during wars, in important harbors like Aquileia.⁴⁰

Several third-century careers demonstrate the significant role that *equites* involved in logistics could play. Some of these men eventually reached the highest equestrian prefectures. An inscription from Rome

³⁶ *HA, Vita Sev. Alex.* 45, 2; cf. 47, 1. On the *Vita Severi Alexandri*, cf. Bertrand-Dagenbach (1990). On imperial travel in general, see further Halfmann (1986).

³⁷ On the role of the *ab epistulis* in logistics, see Kehne (2007), 330.

³⁸ *CIL* 2.4114 = *ILS* 1140 (Hispania Citerior).

³⁹ *AE* 1914, 248 = *AE* 2002, 54 = *IAfr* 455 (Africa Proconsularis). On M. Rossius Vitulus, see *PIR*² R 102; Pflaum (1960–1961), vol. 3, 593–598, no. 224; Devijver (1976–2001), vol. 2, R 11, with further references.

⁴⁰ Cf. Kehne (2007), 331.

dated in the Severan era offers a fine example of an anonymous man whose career included almost all relevant logistic positions: after having been *tribunus militum* and *praefectus classis*, this man continued his career with procurational posts, *procurator ad alimenta* being the first. At the end of his career, he was subsequently *ab epistulis*, *a libellis*, *a rationibus*, and finally *praefectus annonae*. It has even been suggested that this man was identical with Severus' powerful praetorian prefect Fulvius Plautianus, but this hypothesis has been refuted.⁴¹ Yet it is striking that the alternative theory requires that Plautianus' name was erased from an inscription from Tripolitana, in which case he would have been *praefectus vehiculorum* prior to his praetorian prefecture, a position which the eventual emperor Macrinus also occupied at one point.⁴² Another *eques* involved in logistics who reached a high prefecture was Baebius Aurelius Iuncinus, who was *procurator ad annonam Ostiis* and *praefectus vehiculorum* twice, and finally became *praefectus Aegypti* under Caracalla.⁴³ Perhaps Aurelius Iulianus can also be added, if the *a rationibus et a memoria* mentioned in an inscription from Latium is identical with the *praefectus praetorio* mentioned in an inscription from Venetia et Histria.⁴⁴

The career of Fulvius Macrianus maior demonstrates how a convenient combination of logistically relevant posts could even create the opportunity to claim imperial power. Macrianus became *a rationibus* in Egypt under Valerianus. Next, he accompanied this emperor on his Persian campaign and became responsible for the organization of money and supplies for the army in the East during this expedition as *procurator*

⁴¹ *CIL* 6.41277 = 14.4468–4470 = *ILS* 9501 = *AE* 1960, 163–164 (Roma); see Devijver (1976–2001), vol. 2, inc. 255.

⁴² *AE* 1931, 2 = *IRT* 572 (Tripolitana). See *DNP*, Band 6, s.v. Fulvius II.10. Pflaum (1960–1961), vol. 2, 643–644, no. 238, doubted whether this inscription referred to Plautianus. On Macrinus as *praefectus vehiculorum*, see Dio 79, 11, 3.

⁴³ On L. Baebius Aurelius Iuncinus see *PIR*² B 13; *CIL* 10.7580 = *ILS* 1358 (Sardinia); *P. Oxy.* 1408; *P. Giss.* 40; Pflaum (1960–1961), vol. 2, 678–683, no. 251; Bureth (1988), 491; Bastianini (1988), 512. Although the position *procurator ad annonam Ostiis* was a minor procuratorship, its relevance may have increased in certain periods. Iulia Domna's brother-in-law, Iulius Avitus Alexianus, for instance, was *procurator ad annonam Ostiis* in 193, which may have been useful for Severus as he marched on Rome. Cf. Birley (2005), 226.

⁴⁴ On M. Aurelius Iulianus: *CIL* 14.2463 = *CIL* 6.1596 (Castrimoenium, Italy); *CIL* 5.4323 = *ILS* 1333 (Brixia, Italy). The praetorian prefect mentioned in the latter inscription was perhaps the same Iulianus who is mentioned as *praefectus praetorio* in *Cod. Iust.* 7, 33, 1, which dates from the joint reign of Severus and Caracalla.

arcae et praepositus annonae in 259/260.⁴⁵ After Valerianus had been captured, Ballista offered Macrianus the imperial throne, but Macrianus allegedly refused and suggested that his sons, Macrianus minor and Quietus, would become joint emperors. They were proclaimed not much later, with Macrianus maior's control over the imperial treasure and the army supplies in the East—essential sources in wartime—as the principal base of their power.⁴⁶

A comparable case emerges in the career of Mussius Aemilianus. After having gone through the *quattuor militiarum*, he was appointed *praefectus vehicularum* of the three Gallic provinces during the reign of Philippus Arabs.⁴⁷ Then, he held the position of *procurator* of the three Egyptian ports (Alexandria, Pelusium and Paraetionium) and subsequently of the two ports in Ostia, still under Philippus. Under Valerianus, Mussius Aemilianus governed Egypt, first as deputy governor (*agens vice praefecti*) with two *correctores* to assist him, and later as *praefectus Aegypti*. The fact that he is referred to as *dux* by the *Historia Augusta* may indicate that his responsibilities were restricted to the military when he was *agens vice praefecti*, while the *correctores* carried out the civil-administrative tasks.⁴⁸ As *praefectus*, Aemilianus supported the rival emperors Macrianus and Quietus.⁴⁹ After their deaths, he was proclaimed emperor himself in 261, but soon overthrown by *dux* Aurelius Theodotus and executed by Gallienus.⁵⁰ Mussius Aemilianus was thus appointed to positions in which he was responsible for, and had access to, important (food) supplies in both Egypt and Italy. According to Pflaum, Aemilianus' rapid pro-

⁴⁵ Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 7, 10, 5–6; Petrus Patricius, Continuator Dio, *Excerpta de Sententiis*, p. 264, 159. The interpretation of the Greek title (ἐπὶ τῶν καθόλου λόγων λεγόμενος εἶναι βασιλεύως) as a *rationibus* was suggested by Pflaum (1960–1961), vol. 2, 928–933, no. 350.

⁴⁶ According to Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 7, 10, 8, Macrianus refused because his body was deformed; Zonaras 12, 24, and Petrus Patricius, *Excerpta de Sententiis*, p. 264, 159, report that he was lame in one leg. According to *HA, Vita Tyr. Trig.* 12, 7, he declined because of his old age and his long retirement from the military. *HA, Vita Gall.* 1, 3; *Vita Tyr. Trig.* 12, 12, reports that Macrianus shared the emperorship with his sons, but this seems incorrect.

⁴⁷ See *CIL* 14.170 = *ILS* 1433 (Ostia, Italy) for his early career; cf. *PIR*² M 757; *PLRE* I, Aemilianus 6.

⁴⁸ In *HA, Vita Trig. Tyr.* 22, 3, Mussius Aemilianus is called *dux*. According to *PIR*² M 757, these *correctores* held a superior rank.

⁴⁹ Mussius Aemilianus' support appears from the fact that the coins of Macrianus and Quietus were struck at Alexandria. Cf. *PLRE* I, Aemilianus 6.

⁵⁰ *HA, Vita Gall.* 4, 1–2; 5, 6; *Vita Trig. Tyr.* 22, 4; 22, 8; 26, 4; *Epitome de Caesaribus* 32, 4.

motion indicates that he was favored by the emperor Philippus Arabs.⁵¹ Philippus may also have been a specialist in military logistics: Zosimus reports that during Gordianus' Persian campaign in Mesopotamia in 242, Philippus commanded the ships that had to bring supplies to the emperor's army over the Euphrates.⁵²

Military cadre personnel, i.e. *primipili*, centurions, *tribuni* and *prae-fecti*, were ever more involved in military logistics as well: they carried out requisitions to feed the armies and continue the wars.⁵³ They were also increasingly mobilized by civilians to communicate messages to the emperor and his entourage. Military cadre people communicated the complaints about Cassius Dio's harsh policy as governor of a Pannonian province to the praetorian guard, which forced Severus Alexander to keep Dio out of Rome in 229, when he was *consul ordinarius iterum* with the emperor as his colleague.⁵⁴ As has been discussed in Chapter 1, under Gordianus III and Philippus Arabs, villagers of Skaptopara in Thracia and Aragua in Asia Minor respectively, sent military men instead of an orator to the emperor to bring him petitions—a sign that by the end of the 230s, the influence of intellectuals had decreased, as is discussed in the next section.

Equites as Imperial Secretaries

Moreover, as regards legal cases, letters and decrees of the cities, petitions of individuals and whatever else concerns the administration of the Empire, you should have helpers and assistants from the *equites*.⁵⁵

The advice which Cassius Dio puts into the mouth of Maecenas as he addresses the emperor Augustus relates to the author's own time and reflects yet another equestrian office close to the center of power: acting as imperial secretaries. In the early Principate, secretarial posts had been filled by imperial *liberti*, but these duties had been gradually transferred to equestrian men which are distinguished into two groups by Millar: (1) intellectuals, orators and jurists who did not rise through any recognizable career path but entered the imperial entourage directly, and (2) men who were promoted to the imperial secretaries after a career of three equestrian military posts, followed by procuratorial positions.

⁵¹ Pflaum (1960–1961), vol. 2, 926–927.

⁵² Zosimus 1, 18, 3. Cf. De Blois (2001), 140–141.

⁵³ Dobson (1974), 432; cf. Dobson (2000), 142; 151–152.

⁵⁴ On this, see De Blois (2001), 150, with further references.

⁵⁵ Dio 52, 33, 5. Translation: Millar (1992), 105.

Millar emphasizes that the *liberti* were not in the first instance replaced by equestrian civil servants, but by intellectuals from the Greek and later the Latin world.⁵⁶ A good example of this trend is the author Suetonius, who after being selected by Traianus to sit on the juries of *equites* who sat in Rome, subsequently was a *studiis* and a *bibliothecis*, perhaps still under Traianus, and later became Hadrianus' *ab epistulis*.⁵⁷ For such intellectuals their scholarly reputation was the main recommendation for the imperial posts.

In the course of the second and the early third century, Greek sophists gained rising prominence at the imperial court, and the function of *ab epistulis Graecis* turned out to be one of the chief posts open to them. Of the four rhetors in this post whose lives Philostratus described, two belong to the period under discussion: Aelius Antipater of Hierapolis (Phrygia) and Aspasius of Ravenna (Italy).⁵⁸ Antipater was not only appointed *ab epistulis Graecis* by Septimius Severus, but also tutored Caracalla and Geta, thus evidently acquiring prestige in the emperor's entourage and accompanying the imperial family on their journeys. Having also written a huge number of orations and a biography of Septimius Severus, Antipater attained senatorial rank and was appointed governor of Bithynia, but was eventually removed for excessive harshness. He allegedly starved himself to death after the murder of Geta.⁵⁹ Aspasius, who despite his Italian origins gained fame as a Greek orator, was *ab epistulis* under one of the Severi and in that capacity accompanied the emperor to various parts of the Empire.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ Millar (1992), 89, points out that some secretarial posts had been held by Greeks of equestrian rank as early as Claudius' reign. Suetonius, *Dom.*, 7, 2, reports that Domitianus 'shared certain of the chief *officia* between *libertini* and *equites Romani*' (translation Millar). *HA, Vita Hadr.* 22, 8, is thus incorrect in stating that Hadrianus was the first emperor to have *equites* as *ab epistulis* and a *libellis*.

⁵⁷ *AE* 1953, 73 (Africa Proconsularis). Cf. Millar (1992), 90. On Suetonius, see also Baldwin (1983) and Wallace-Hadrill (1984).

⁵⁸ The other two were Alexander from Seleucia (Philostratus, *Vitae Sophistarum* 2, 5), *ab epistulis* of Marcus Aurelius between 169 and 175; and Hadrianus of Tyre (Philostratus, *Vitae Sophistarum* 2, 10), who was nominated *ab epistulis* on his deathbed by Commodus. Cf. Millar (1992), 91–92.

⁵⁹ On Aelius Antipater, see Philostratus, *Vitae Sophistarum* 2, 24–26; *IEph* 2026 = Oliver (1989), no. 244, with commentary on 471–474. Cf. Bowersock (1969), 53; 55–57; Millar (1992), 92–93; Potter (2004), 78.

⁶⁰ On Aspasius, see Philostratus, *Vitae Sophistarum* 2, 33. Potter (2004), 78, assumes he was appointed *ab epistulis Graecis* sometime between AD 211 and 216. Cf. Bowersock (1969), 56; 92; Millar (1992), 93. Peachin and Preuss (1997), 189–191, suggest that (Aspasius) Paternus, *praefectus urbi* 264–266, descended from Aspasius of Ravenna.

Another group came to the fore from the reign of Marcus Aurelius onward: the jurists. The persons who in the second and third centuries entered the emperor's service as jurists did so as *a libellis* (in charge of the processing of petitions) or as *consilarii* (advisers on the *consilium*). The appearance of the legally-qualified *a libellis* is—like the emergence of *iudices vice Caesaris* from the reign of Septimius Severus onward—yet another clear sign of the bulk of legal business with which the emperor had to deal by then.⁶¹ The earliest example of a man who owed his career to his standing as a lawyer was Aurelius Papirius Dionysius, who was *a libellis* and *a cognitionibus* (in charge of the emperor's court of law, contributing to judicial investigations), before he reached the high equestrian prefectures of the *annona* and subsequently of Egypt.⁶² Dionysius started his career under Marcus Aurelius and became part of the *consilium*.⁶³

Well before the Severan period lawyers were co-opted directly into the emperor's *consilium*, under Severan administration learned jurists rose to the top, with Papinianus, Ulpianus and Iulius Paulus being the most striking examples.⁶⁴ Aemilius Papinianus evidently was a member of a praetorian prefect's *consilium* and had been *advocatus fisci* before he became *a libellis* in the early part of Septimius Severus' reign. Between 205 and 211 he served as praetorian prefect.⁶⁵ Domitius Ulpianus of Tyre (Syria) may have served as *assessor* on the court of a *praetor* in Rome in the early reign of Severus. Late sources record that he was an apprentice of the praetorian prefect Papinianus and a member of his *consilium*, and that he was at some stage *a libellis*. Although the sources are not the most reliable, Honoré has shown that Ulpianus' style indeed corresponds

⁶¹ On the *libelli*, see Millar (1992), 240–252.

⁶² The *a cognitionibus* personally attended the emperor and accompanied him on his journeys. Millar (1992), 106–107, points at an *a cognitionibus* who was with Severus in Asia Minor in 202, one who was with Caracalla in Rome and Gallia or Germania, and Cledonius, *a cognitionibus* of Valerianus, who was with him when he was captured by Shapur. Millar adds that those *a cognitionibus* from the Severan period of whom we have information, seem to have had normal equestrian careers.

⁶³ On Aurelius Papirius Dionysius, see *IGRR* I, no. 135; Dio 73, 13–14; *PIR*² A 1567; Pflaum (1960–1961), vol. 1, 472–476, no. 181; Millar (1992), 94.

⁶⁴ On direct co-option of lawyers into the *consilium*, see *Digesta* 27, 1, 30 (Papinianus). On the lawyers under the Severan emperors, see Millar (1992), 94–97; Honoré (1994), 19–32; De Blois (2001), 138–141.

⁶⁵ On Papinianus' career, see *CIL* 6.228 = *ILS* 2187 (Roma); *HA, Vita Carac.* 8; *Vita Sev. Alex.* 25, 6; *Digesta* 20, 5, 12; 22, 1, 3, 3. According to Peachin (1992), Papinianus may have been a member of the *consilium* of praetorian prefect Veturius Macrinus.

with the style of the *subscriptions* written between 205 and 209.⁶⁶ In 222, Ulpianus was *praefectus annonae* and under Severus Alexander he was *praefectus praetorio* for a brief period, as will be discussed below in section 3.3.⁶⁷ Strangely, no actual post of Iulius Paulus is reliably attested. He seems to have been a member of Papinianus' council and he may have been an *a cognitionibus*. It is unclear whether he was formally called a *consiliarius*, nor is there any confirmation of the *Historia Augusta's* statement that he became praetorian prefect under Severus Alexander. Yet a series of passages from his writings composed during the reigns of the Severi refer to discussions within the imperial *consilium* in which he took part.⁶⁸

Other examples of high-ranking jurists include Modestinus and Rufinus. Honoré suggests that a man named Herennius Modestinus may have been a *libellis* in 223, but his solely stylistic arguments remain disputable.⁶⁹ He was a *iuris peritus*, a learned jurist, appointed to teach the son of the emperor Maximinus Thrax, according to the *Historia Augusta*. Modestinus was a pupil of Ulpianus and he ultimately reached the position of *praefectus vigilum*. That Modestinus was at least a renowned lawyer in the reign of Gordianus III emerges from a passage in the *Codex Iustinianus* to be dated in AD 239, in which the emperor reminds a petitioner that Modestinus, 'a jurisconsult of no insignificant *auctoritas*' had already sent him a ruling on the same matter.⁷⁰ Modestinus disappears from the sources about 241.⁷¹

⁶⁶ On Ulpianus' early career, see *Digesta* 4, 2, 9, 3; *HA, Vita Pesc. Nig.* 7, 4; *Vita Sev. Alex.* 26, 5–6. Cf. Eutropius, *Breviarium*, 8, 23; Festus, *Breviarium*, 22. His career is discussed by Honoré (2002), 1–36.

⁶⁷ On Ulpianus as *praefectus annonae* and praetorian prefect, see *Cod. Iust.* 8, 37, 4; 4, 65, 4; *HA, Vita Sev. Alex.* 68, 1. According to *HA, Vita Elag.* 16, 4, Ulpianus was dismissed by Elagabalus, but it is unclear which position he held at that time and whether this statement is true. Aurelius Victor, *Liber de Caesaribus* 24, 6, seems to be mistaken when he reports that Elagabalus made Ulpianus praetorian prefect.

⁶⁸ Paulus as a member of Papinianus' council see *Digesta* 12, 1, 40; for discussions on the imperial *consilium* in which Paulus took part see *Digesta* 4, 4, 38; 14, 5, 8; 32, 27, 1; 36, 1, 76, 1; on Paulus as praetorian prefect, see *HA, Vita Pesc. Niger* 7, 4; *Vita Sev. Alex.* 26, 5; Syme (1991), 216, argues that Paulus probably never was a praetorian prefect.

⁶⁹ On the suggestion that Modestinus was a *libellis* see Honoré (1994), 104–107; cf. Honoré (2002), 33. Millar (1999) accepts Honoré's hypothesis.

⁷⁰ *Cod. Iust.* 3, 42, 5: 'a non contemnendae auctoritatis iuris consulto', cf. Millar (1999), 102.

⁷¹ On Modestinus, see *PIR*² H 112 and M 655; Modestinus as *praefectus vigilum*: *CIL* 6.266 (Roma); tutor of Maximinus Iunior: *HA, Vita Max.* 27, 5; he may have been *procurator* in Dalmatia and was Ulpianus' pupil (*Digesta* 47, 2, 52, 20); Cf. Kunkel (1967), 259–261, no. 72.

The career of a man named Gnaeus Licinius Rufinus has been reconstructed from a number of Greek inscriptions. This Rufinus, who apparently was Paulus' student, started his career under Septimius Severus and seems to have been *consiliarius Augusti, ab epistulis Graecis*, and a *studiis* (an official connected with the emperor's judicial activity) respectively. Thereafter, he may have been a *rationibus* and a *libellis*, perhaps as Modestinus' predecessor or successor, after which he seems to have been accepted into the senate. He was *praetor*, governor of Noricum and finally gained consular rank by holding a suffect consulate or *adlectio inter consulares*. It has been suggested that Licinius Rufinus was one of the *vigintiviri* in 238.⁷² While others seem to have been a *libellis* under the Severi and entered the senate in an advanced stage of their career, which indicates that the Severan emperors were inclined to promote such intellectuals to senatorial rank, Rufinus is noteworthy in that an inscription set up in Thyatira explicitly mentions his equestrian rank (ἱππικόν, line 3) prior to his consular rank (λαμπροτατόν ὑπατικόν, line 14).⁷³ Modestinus and Rufinus may have been the last great jurists who exercised particular influence in the emperors' entourage. After that date, probably even from 230 onward, the role of identifiable legal writers at the emperor's side ceased and learned jurists seemed to have disappeared from the center of power. If Rufinus had indeed been one of the *vigintiviri*, his involvement in 238 may have hastened jurists' ensuing obscurity in imperial entourages after the 230s.⁷⁴

According to De Blois, jurists continued to secure appointments a *libellis* after about 240 and maintained high a quality of work there, but the style of rescripts changed and they seem no longer to have written scholarly works like those of Ulpianus. Jurists no longer reached the highest equestrian posts. De Blois posits that the learned jurists entered the *consilia* of the *iudices vice Caesaris*, the deputies of the emperor who took over judicial functions of the *Augusti* from the reign of Septimius

⁷² On Rufinus, see TAM V.2, no. 984–988 = IGRR IV, no. 1215–1218, and an inscription published by Hermann (1997), 111. Rufinus' career is reevaluated in Millar (1999). Rufinus as Paulus' pupil, see *Digesta* 40, 13, 4. On Rufinus as *vigintivir* in 238, see Herrmann (1997), 121, and Millar (1999), 96.

⁷³ Other examples of a *libellis* who entered the senate under the Severi were P. Aelius Coeranus (Dio 77, 5, 3–5; *PIR*² A 161), an *eques* who became *consul suffectus* circa 212 (cf. Leunissen (1989), 173), and M. Ulpius Ofellius Theodorus (*PIR* V 560; *RE* Suppl. 14, 942, s.v. Ulpus 44), a *libellis* under Caracalla (*SEG* 37, 1186, line 11) and consular governor of Cappadocia under Elagabalus. Cf. Millar (1999), 95; 97.

⁷⁴ Millar (1992), 97, identifies Aurelius Arcadius Charisius, *magister libellorum* at about AD 300, as the next identifiable legal writer at court.

Severus, as discussed in Chapter 1. He argues that the rise of those deputies may have contributed to the relative lowering of the learned jurists' status. Furthermore, he claims that patronage and recommendation structures no longer worked in favor of the, mainly Rome-based, learned jurists.⁷⁵

It is not until Traianus or Hadrianus that we find examples of Millar's second category: men who were promoted from an equestrian career to become imperial secretaries. Obviously, such men were property-owners of some standing, who may be presumed to have had the usual Graeco-Roman upper class literary education, but who were not promoted into the imperial entourage on the basis of their cultural and scholarly background, as the intellectuals did.⁷⁶ A man who went through the full range of military and civilian posts before becoming *ab epistulis* under Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus, was Varius Clemens from Noricum. After a long succession of military posts, he held a series of provincial procuratorships, culminating in the procuratorship of Belgica and the two Germaniae, before he was finally appointed *ab epistulis*.⁷⁷ Millar compares Clemens' background with that of other *ab epistulis* to striking results. Since the concerns of most secretarial posts was essentially verbal, literary men dominated these positions.⁷⁸ In Clemens' days, the careers of the military upstarts Pertinax and Valerius Maximianus seem to have been furthered, but so were those of three former senatorial *legati legionis*: Claudius Fronto, Martius Verus and Avidius Cassius, who were rapidly promoted to militarily important governorships of consular provinces.⁷⁹ The flourishing careers of these five men confirms Birley's hypothesis that the *ab epistulis* was in a position to recommend men to the emperor and that the appointment of Clemens as *ab epistulis* was thus vitally important to them.⁸⁰

Unfortunately, the evidence on the careers of those who served as imperial secretaries is very slight and becomes ever more scattered from the late second century onwards. Noteworthy is the career of Marcius

⁷⁵ De Blois (2001), 147–149.

⁷⁶ On this group, see Millar (1992), 101–110.

⁷⁷ Pflaum (1960–1961), vol. 1, 368–373, no. 156.

⁷⁸ Millar (1992), 105–106.

⁷⁹ On Claudius Fronto, see *PIR*² C 874; on Martius Verus, see *PIR*² M 348; on Avidius Cassius, see *PIR*² A 1402. See also Alföldy (1977), *passim*, on them.

⁸⁰ Birley (1992), 23; 27; 48 no. 8, in which Birley argues that the office of *ab epistulis* was an important center of information on possible candidates for all kind of posts, the most important broker at court; cf. De Blois (2001), 149.

Claudius Agrippa. According to Dio's account, he was born a slave and became *advocatus fisci* under Septimius Severus. He was exiled by this emperor and later recalled by Caracalla, who made him *a cognitio-nibus* and *ab epistulis* circa 215. Agrippa was then enrolled in the *ordo senatorius* (*adlectio inter praetorios*). Under Macrinus, Agrippa allegedly became governor of Pannonia Inferior and later of Dacia and Moesia Inferior.⁸¹ Agrippa's career is a fine example of the potential advantages of being close to the emperor as his secretary. Why a man who was exiled by Severus was taken back in service by Caracalla and appointed at posts which involved presence in the emperor's entourage is of course an interesting, though inexplicable, question.

After circa 240, information on imperial secretaries becomes scarce, if there is any information at all. That the imperial secretaries seem to have vanished from the earth is an inexplicable phenomenon. A passage from Philostratus demonstrates that under Marcus Aurelius the *ab epistulis* accompanied the emperor when he resided in Sirmium between military campaigns in Pannonia in the 170s.⁸² Changing priorities, as discussed in Chapter 1, may have caused the emperors after 240 to spend less time on non-military matters and certainly affected that the emperors encountered more military specialists than sophists and lawyers. The fact that even Marcus Aurelius rejected one case due to his military activity may further imply that handling legal matters was eventually no longer self-evident for emperors on campaign.⁸³ Whether imperial secretaries were eventually no longer taken along on imperial journeys and expeditions, or became invisible within a more bureaucratic administrative system in the second half of the third century, is a problem which cannot be solved for lack of evidence.

In conclusion we can say that some of the high equestrians indeed played an ever increasing role in third-century imperial administration in various spheres of power. This trend opened up opportunities for those

⁸¹ Dio 79, 13, 2–4. Whether he was identical with the Marcus Agrippa mentioned in *HA, Vita Car.* 6, 7 as commander of the fleet and one of the accomplices in the murder of Caracalla is unclear. Cf. Jones (1942), who thinks Agrippa had no naval career. On Marcus Agrippa, see *PIR*² M 224.

⁸² Philostratus, *Vitae Sophistarum*, 2, 5. On this matter, see also Millar (1992), 5–6.

⁸³ Millar (1992), 6, citing an Athenian inscription on which Marcus rejects a case, stating: 'in order that after so long he shall not have to wait for the opportune moments in which it will be possible for me to judge the cases which need a decision precisely at the time of our military activity.'

equites involved, which no members of the *ordo* had experienced in previous centuries, and this clearly affected their level of power positively.

Sophists and jurists were the first who saw their opportunities at court increase. Their rise started under Marcus Aurelius and lasted until circa 230, perhaps somewhat longer—until 240—in the case of the jurists. Yet after the age of the Severi, the dominant role of these intellectuals within the imperial council seems to have been assumed by other people at court: specialists in military tactics and logistics, in fiscal administration, taxation and requisition. As emperors visited Rome less frequently, military men and administrators who were present in the emperor's entourage or met him and his leading advisers in the field gained more influence. Such men could then promoted careers of people who helped them in their work, i.e. military cadre personnel. The military cadres consisting of centurions, *primipili*, *tribuni*, and *praefecti*, who were in a position to influence the soldiers and whose role in the fiscal and provincial administration became ever more important, could no longer go ignored in imperial appointment policies. The situation of crisis, in which Varius Clemens had been able to further the careers of military experienced men like Pertinax and Maximianus during Marcus Aurelius' wars in the Danube regions, became a permanent state of affairs from 230 onward. From those days, the power of militarily-skilled men seems to have gradually improved at the expense of non-military intellectuals and elite, both equestrians and senators. The equestrians, however, did not appropriate senators' roles in the central administration of the Empire either suddenly or completely. The process lasted several decades, at the end of which senators were still not ousted everywhere.

3.2. *The Status of High-ranking Equestrians in the Third Century*

These changes in power must have affected the status of at least those high-ranking equestrians who personally increased their power, and may even have elevated the status of the *ordo* as a whole. Again, however, for modern scholars it is much more complex to detect these consequences for their status than to perceive expansions in the spheres of their power. Still, some observations can be made on the matter.

First of all, intellectuals. The sophists and jurists increased their power as a result of their high status. Almost all these men originated from

the highest circles at urban and provincial levels, and their education and scholarly reputation drew them into the emperor's entourage. Their verbal and intellectual abilities qualified them exceptionally well to perform secretarial duties in the emperor's service, as long as the emperors stayed based in Rome and spent most of their time carrying out non-military duties.⁸⁴ Consequently, it is no surprise that from the 230s, when the emperors were obliged to focus their attention ever more on military crises, the role of the intellectuals in imperial administration changed. Intellectuals did not immediately and entirely disappear from the emperor's entourage, as for instance the role of Plotinus and his circle during the reign of Gallienus demonstrates, but their active involvement in the central administration of the Empire was drastically reduced.⁸⁵ These intellectuals thus represented a category within the *equester ordo* of notables who were defined by their (landed) property and who reached their high positions within the emperor's service through education (*paideia*) and status at the local level.⁸⁶ Such intellectuals could reach the highest-ranking equestrian prefectures, which involved a high level of status, or they could even be elevated to senatorial rank.

Alongside these eminent *equites* another group arose that became increasingly important within the *ordo* in the third century, namely military professionals who had risen from soldier ranks to equestrian rank.⁸⁷ They owed their high status in the emperor's service to experience and participation in imperial power. The equestrian census which had hindered entry into the equestrian order for such men in the first and second centuries was apparently no longer an obstacle.⁸⁸ What began in the early third century as a minority eventually became the dominant power circle among the equestrians, a development which is most clearly noticeable if we consider the sort of men who reached the imperial throne between AD 268 and 284. High military commands and a growing number of provincial governorships were gradually conferred upon

⁸⁴ Cf. Millar (1992), 97, who argues that the role which these intellectuals, orators and jurists 'played at the emperor's side was an important aspect of the capture of the emperor by the ruling circles of the provincial cities.'

⁸⁵ On Gallienus and the circle of Plotinus, see for instance Porphyrius, *Vita Plotini* 12; cf. De Blois, (1976), 145–147, and 185–193; on Plotinus and his sympathizers turning their backs on practical politics, see De Blois (1989); De Blois (1994), 172–174.

⁸⁶ On the role of intellectuals at the local level, see also Slootjes (2009).

⁸⁷ Cf. Christol (1999).

⁸⁸ Cf. Heil (2008b), 749.

high equestrian men instead of senators. Yet until the 260s these transformations were presented as temporary solutions, for equestrians were appointed as *agentes vice*. The increased power of these *equites* was not formalized and thus not officially acknowledged. This may have obscured the growth of such *equites*' power for other groups involved in imperial administration, both at the central and the local level—and possibly even to these *equites* themselves—and it may have impeded, or at least delayed, an increase of these *equites*' status.

Another factor may have distorted on the perception of changes in the *ordo*'s relative status: in the course of the third century, especially from the 250s onward, high-ranking *equites* were promoted to senatorial rank less often. The limited number of *homines novi* detectable in the second half of the third century may indicate that senatorial status had become less attractive to men in such high equestrian posts, or that emperors no longer saw any need to elevate them to senatorial rank. One could also argue that emperors did not consider these military men appropriate candidates to enter the senate. Yet second-century examples of men with a similar military background and career who were accepted into the senate seem to refute this argument.

Eventually, however, increasing status followed increased power for these equestrians involved in military matters and provincial government. This process started low-profile with the extension of the perfectissimate in gradual stages. As Pflaum has demonstrated, a growing number of equestrian officers were awarded with the title *vir perfectissimus* instead of *vir egregius*.⁸⁹ Under the Severi, the title was reserved for the high equestrian prefects (the *praefecti annonae*, *vigilum*, and *Aegypti*) and imperial secretaries. In the reign of Gordianus III, the title was also bestowed upon a *praefectus classis* and a *procurator* of Mauretania Caesariensis. From the 260s, the title *perfectissimus* also went to equestrian provincial *praesides* and even to a *dux*.⁹⁰ That from the late 260s onward the emperors themselves were mostly equestrians was probably a result from the rise in status of such military equestrian upstarts. Only under

⁸⁹ Pflaum (1970). Just as senators adopted the epithet *clarissimus* to express their rank, equestrian official developed a hierarchy of epithets: *egregius*, *perfectissimus*, *eminentissimus*. *Vir eminentissimus* was the normal and exclusive title of the praetorian prefect until the reign of Septimius Severus. Cf. Salway (2006), 119. On the inflation in titles and the extension of the eminentissimate to prefects of the second rank under Severus and Caracalla, see Salway (2006), 123–124.

⁹⁰ See Pflaum (1960–1961), vol. 2, 624, note 10, for a list of *perfectissimi viri* in the third century. Cf. Pflaum (1970), 177–178.

the emperor Constantine, this process of elevation of status for high equestrians came to an end, as he granted all high equestrians senatorial status.⁹¹

3.3. *The praefecti praetorio: A Case Study*

A case study on the power and status of the praetorian prefects may yield additional or more specific insights about the developing position of those members of the *ordo equester* whom third-century changes affected. Admittedly, the case of the *praefectus praetorio* is in a certain way unrepresentative of all high-ranking equestrians, as it does not illustrate a shift from senatorial to equestrian power: from the establishment of the position in 2 BC the post of commander of the *cohortes praetorianae*, whose basic function it was to guard the emperor's life, had been assigned to men of equestrian rank. Yet, as it is the only equestrian position on which we have evidence of its holders' identities and authorities on a more or less continuous basis, this case study can display the process of the increasing power and status in more detail. Furthermore, the case of the praetorian prefect can demonstrate how the changing position of the equestrian officer affected his relation with the senatorial elite and the emperors, the other main power groups within the administration of the Empire.

The uniqueness of the praetorian prefecture, combined with the fact that we are relatively well informed on the prefects' identities has inspired many scholars to examine both the officeholders and the office in itself during the Principate.⁹² Their works have been invaluable for the examination on the position of the praetorian prefects in the period AD 193 to 284 which follows.

⁹¹ Salway (2006), 132–135.

⁹² Mommsen (1899), 267–269, and Stein (1963), *passim*, discussed certain aspects of the prefecture in their studies of Roman law and the equestrian order respectively, whereas Durry (1938, second edition 1968) and Passerini (1939) dealt with the praetorian prefecture and its holders incidentally in their studies of the praetorian cohorts in the 1930s. Howe (1942) was the first to devote a monograph to the history and development of the pre-Constantinian prefecture. He was mainly concerned with how the office, in origin purely military, became a purely civil one under Constantine. While Howe's extensive prosopography of officeholders and his other appendices, with which he amplified and refined our knowledge on the third-century prefecture, won high praise, his interpretation of the constitutional position of the prefect of the praetorian guard was not that well received. Cf. Giles (1943); Reinhold (1943); Reinmuth (1944); Last (1944); Lewis (1945). On the praetorian prefecture during the Principate, see also *RE* 22 (1954), s.v. *Praefectus*

The Power of the Praetorian Prefects: Military Authority

From the establishment of the office, the primary duty of the praetorian prefects was of course to protect the emperor and the imperial family. Some examples indicate that this still fell within their range of duties in the third century. For instance, Flavius Genialis, prefect under Didius Iulianus, was with the emperor until the end of his life.⁹³ Genialis' final fate is not recorded, but it is not unlikely that he died while attempting to guard the emperor. Antiochianus and an unnamed colleague, praetorian prefects under Elagabalus, allegedly pacified the praetorians when they rioted, fearing that the emperor would harm *Caesar* Severus Alexander. Antiochianus persuaded a small number of praetorians who had come to the palace not to kill the emperor, while the other prefect was sent to the praetorians' camp and convinced them to spare Elagabalus. Antiochianus and his colleague may also have been the anonymous prefects who perished with Elagabalus in 222.⁹⁴ If we may believe Zosimus, Severus Alexander's prefects found themselves in the presence of his mother Iulia Mamaea in the palace after the emperor had died; they were killed along with the empress.⁹⁵ In their capacity as bodyguards, praetorian prefects regularly accompanied emperors on their journeys. Third-century praetorian prefects are attested regularly as imperial *comites*, joining emperors on military expeditions. An inscription from Rome demonstrates that Plautianus was *comes* of Septimius Severus and Caracalla on all their expeditions until his downfall in 205, and Dio suggests that Papinianus was in Britannia with Severus and his sons.⁹⁶ Both Macrinus and Oclatinus Adventus seem to have been present as prefects in Mesopotamia when Caracalla was killed, joining him on his Parthian expedition. A

praetorio, 2391–2426 (in 2426–2502, Enßlin deals with the prefecture in Late Antiquity); Chastagnol (1970) with a list of prefects between AD 202 and 326; Millar (1992), 122–131; Absil (1997/1998), dealing with the prefects from Augustus to Commodus; De Blois (2001), focusing on the role of jurists as prefects; Eich (2005), 211–257. Chastagnol (1968) and Barnes (1992) specifically deal with the prefecture after AD 284. A list of known *praefecti praetorio* between AD 193 and 284 can be found in Appendix 3.

⁹³ *HA, Vita Did. Iul.* 3, 1; 8, 6–8.

⁹⁴ *HA, Vita Elag.* 14–15; cf. Dio 79, 21, 1. On Antiochianus, see also *PIR*² A 738. If Antiochianus was indeed one of the prefects who died along with Elagabalus, he cannot have been identical with the Antiochianus to whom Severus Alexander addressed *Cod. Iust.* 6, 35, 3 in AD 222.

⁹⁵ Zosimus 1, 13, 2.

⁹⁶ Plautianus: *CIL* 6.1074 = *ILS* 456 = *AE* 1954, 245 (Roma): '[...] *comitis per omnes expeditiones eorum*'. Papinianus: Dio 77, 14, 5–6.

prefect of the guard, possibly Macrinus or Adventus, also accompanied Caracalla on his journey through Thracia in 214.⁹⁷ Elagabalus' prefect, ... atus, whose full name is unknown, is attested as *comes et amicus fidissimus* of the emperor, although it cannot be determined whether he was *comes* during his prefecture or prior to it.⁹⁸

Some references indicate that even when, after the Severan era, praetorian prefects were increasingly sent on assignment detached from the emperors, as will be discussed below, prefects occasionally still found themselves in the imperial entourage. Successianus, praetorian prefect of Valerianus according to Zosimus, is said to have helped the ruler in the restoration of Antiocheia, which was ruined either by an earthquake or during a Persian attack. He probably was the ἑπαρχος who was captured by the Persians along with the emperor.⁹⁹ Not long after Valerianus had been captured, Gallienus promoted his *praefectus vigilum* Volusianus to the rank of *praefectus praetorio*. Both the emperor and Volusianus were in Rome when they were colleagues as *consules ordinarii* in 261, and it is likely that Volusianus regularly was a member of the imperial entourage during the next few years, when Gallienus spent most of his time in Italy.¹⁰⁰ When the emperor left the capital to fight the Goths and Heruli at the end of 266, he left Rome in the hands of Volusianus, who then became *praefectus urbi*. Heraclianus, who succeeded Volusianus as praetorian prefect, was present in Gallienus' entourage when the emperor returned to Italy to put down the revolt of Aureolus. Yet he became an example of a disloyal prefect, as several sources attest that he was the one who instigated the murder of Gallienus.¹⁰¹

The bond between an emperor and his praetorian prefect was based on loyalty. On occasion, an emperor retained in office a prefect who was installed by his predecessor, as Septimius Severus allegedly did with

⁹⁷ Macrinus and Adventus in Mesopotamia: Dio 79, 3–5; 79, 14; Herodianus 4, 12–14. Thracia: Dio 78, 16, 7; Herodianus 4, 8, 1; *HA, Vita Carac.* 5, 8. See also Halfmann (1986), 224.

⁹⁸ *CIL* 6.41190 = 6.3839a = 6.31776a = *ILS* 1329 = *AE* 2003, 182 (Roma). It has been suggested that this prefect ... atus was identical with T. Messius Extricatus, but this conjecture has been rejected by Salway (1997).

⁹⁹ *Res Gestae Divi Saporis* 11, translation Frye (1984), 372.

¹⁰⁰ Halfmann (1986), 237–238, on Gallienus' presence in Italy. The main part of Volusianus' career can be deduced from *CIL* 10.1706 (Arretium, Italy), probably erected circa 261. Cf. *HA, Vita Gall.* 1, 2. On Volusianus' career, see also section 4.2.

¹⁰¹ *HA, Gall.* 13–14; Zosimus 1, 40, 2–3; Zonaras 12, 25. See also Goltz-Hartmann (2008), 289–292.

Flavius Iuvenalis and Diocletian with Aristobulus, but usually an emperor personally selected his praetorian prefect(s).¹⁰² Trust seems to have been of overriding importance in the emperor's selection process, and even appears to have overruled a candidate's experience and background. As the only man who was allowed to be armed in the emperor's presence, a prefect could easily become involved in political intrigues. A crisis of loyalty between the emperor and his praetorian prefect meant the end of one of them. Aemilius Laetus, for example, engineered the death of Commodus and the election of Pertinax in 193. He overplayed his hand by betraying Pertinax as well: Pertinax' successor Didius Iulianus replaced him and put him to death soon afterward.¹⁰³ Literary sources mention a split between Septimius Severus and Plautianus, caused by an incident in 203. According to Dio, Severus was displeased at the large number of statues of Plautianus, and ordered that some of them were to be melted down, which caused the rumor that the prefect had been overthrown. The *Historia Augusta* reports that Severus declared Plautianus a public enemy and that he destroyed Plautianus' statues after the prefect had set up his own statue among the statues of Severus' kinsmen. Although the two were reconciled by the time Severus returned to Rome in 204, the damage could not be repaired completely and a final split between the emperor and his prefect produced Plautianus' death in January 205.¹⁰⁴ About a decade later, Macrinus' betrayed and murdered Caracalla, thus becoming the first praetorian prefect who was acclaimed emperor. Most sources state that the emperor Philippus Arabs, praetorian prefect under Gordianus III, was also involved in the latter's death.¹⁰⁵ Heraclianus' disloyalty toward Gallienus mentioned above, was punished mercilessly by Claudius Gothicus, who discarded him, after which Heraclianus committed suicide.¹⁰⁶ In 284, Flavius Aper, prefect

¹⁰² Flavius Iuvenalis: *HA, Vita Sev.* 6, 5. Aristobulus: Aurelius Victor, *Liber de Caesaribus* 39, 14; cf. Ammianus Marcellinus 23, 1, 1. Perhaps this was also the case with Veturius Macrinus, who was appointed praetorian prefect by Didius Iulianus as a peace gesture to Severus, according to *HA, Vita Did. Iul.* 7, 4. However, it is unclear whether this appointment was confirmed by Severus. See Howe (1942), 68–69.

¹⁰³ Dio 73, 22; 74, 1; 74, 6–9; 74, 16; Herodianus 1, 17; 2, 1–3; *HA, Vita Comm.* 17, 1; *Vita Pert.* 4–5; 10, 9; *Vita Did. Iul.* 6, 2.

¹⁰⁴ Dio 76, 16, 2; *HA, Vita Sev.* 14, 5–6.

¹⁰⁵ *HA, Vita Gord.* 29–30; Zosimus 1, 18; Zonaras 12, 18. See Potter (1990), 204–212, on the confused tradition.

¹⁰⁶ Zonaras 12, 25. Potter (2004), 264–267, suggests that Heraclianus was sent on expedition in the East by Claudius in 270 and committed suicide after failing to restore Roman authority there.

under Carus and later under Numerianus, was accused of the latter's death and killed by Numerianus' imperial successor Diocletian.¹⁰⁷

Because loyalty to and mutual trust with the emperor were essential to the prefectship, it is no surprise that emperors regularly chose friends or relatives as their praetorian prefects. Third-century examples include Priscus and Florianus, and perhaps Plautianus and Papinianus. According to the *Historia Augusta*, Pupienus chose an uncle (*patruus*), Pinarius Valens, as his prefect. The same source states that Gordianus III sought to replace Philippus as prefect with his relative Maecius Gordianus at the end of his reign. The inclusion of these examples, even if they are not all historically correct, shows that for both the author and his audience the appointment of relatives was plausible. The reason for this practice was evident: a relative had a natural bond with the emperor and could thus be assumed a loyal ally. Occasionally, however, it happened the other way around: a prefect could be included in the imperial family. Septimius Severus included Plautianus in the *domus divina* by making him Caracalla's father-in-law. Timesitheus became the emperor Gordianus III's own father-in-law, as did Flavius Aper, prefect under Numerianus.¹⁰⁸

To further reduce the chance of abuse of power, emperors generally appointed two praetorian prefects to perform the prefecture simultaneously. At the beginning of the third century, this certainly still was common practice: Flavius Genialis and Tullius Crispinus were colleagues under Didius Iulianus, and Plautianus had Aemilius Saturninus as his colleague during Septimius Severus' reign. It is generally assumed that Plautianus was sole prefect from the day Saturninus died very soon after his appointment.¹⁰⁹ Papinianus seems to have had Maecius Laetus

¹⁰⁷ *HA, Vita Car.* 12–13; 15, 4; Aurelius Victor, *Liber de Caesaribus*, 38, 4–6; 39, 14; Eutropius, *Breviarium*, 9, 18–20; Zonaras 12, 30–31.

¹⁰⁸ On Priscus, brother of Philippus Arabs, see Zosimus 1, 19, 2; on Plautianus as kinsman of Septimius Severus, see Herodianus 3, 10, 6; on Plautianus as Caracalla's father-in-law, see Dio 77, 1, 2; Herodianus 3, 10, 7; on Papinianus as relative of Iulia Domna, see *HA, Vita Carac.* 8, 2; on Florianus, brother of Tacitus, see *HA, Vita Tac.* 14, 1; 17, 4; Aurelius Victor, *Liber de Caesaribus* 36, 2; on Pinarius Valens, kinsman of Pupienus, see *HA, Vita Max.-Balb.* 4, 4; 5, 5; on Maecius Gordianus, relative of Gordianus, see *HA, Vita Gord.* 30, 1; on Timesitheus, father-in-law of Gordianus, see *HA, Gord.* 23, 6; Zosimus 1, 17, 2; on Flavius Aper as father-in-law of Numerianus, see *HA, Vita Car.* 12, 1. In some cases, prefects acted as tutors of young *Caesares* or *Augusti*: Papinianus is attested as Geta's and Caracalla's tutor (*HA, Vita Car.* 8, 3) and Silvanus, if he was indeed praetorian prefect, was entrusted with the care of Gallienus' son Saloninus in Cologne. See Bleckmann (1992), 245, with further references. On Silvanus as praetorian prefect, see Howe (1942), 81, no. 50; König (1981), 47; John-Hartmann-Gerhardt (2008), 1075.

¹⁰⁹ Dio 76, 14, 2, accuses Plautianus of Saturninus' death.

and then Valerius Patruinus as colleagues.¹¹⁰ Under Caracalla, Oclatinus Adventus and Macrinus may have divided the military and non-military tasks of the prefecture, as the former was a *vir militaris* and the latter a juridically skilled bureaucrat.¹¹¹ Macrinus as emperor chose two militarily experienced prefects, Iulianus and Nestor. As has been noted above, the literary evidence attests that under Elagabalus there were two simultaneously operating prefects, Antiochianus and his anonymous colleague. Severus Alexander allegedly appointed Ulpianus as a third prefect over Flavianus and Chrestus in a supervisory role. Later, Ulpianus had them put to death and became sole prefect.¹¹² The last pairs of prefects can be found in the early 240s under Gordianus III: Timesitheus and Priscus, and finally Priscus and Philippus.¹¹³ From the reign of Philippus Arabs onward, there is very little evidence pointing to pairs of prefects. Valerianus and Gallienus may each have had their own prefect or perhaps even prefects, but unfortunately the evidence does not yield definite conclusions.

Along with their primary task of guarding the emperor and commanding the praetorian cohorts, both in times of peace and mobilized in battles, the praetorian prefects occasionally commanded additional troops. This practice started as early as the end of the first century AD.¹¹⁴ When an emperor did not want to leave a crucial military expedition to a provincial governor, and he could not lead the troops in person, it frequently was the praetorian prefect who appeared as commander-in-chief of a field army and who held the title of supreme commander *vice principis*. In the third century, there are plenty of cases in which a *praefectus praetorio* acted as commander of large military units, even (detachments of) legions. In 218, for example, Macrinus' praetorian prefect Ulpianus was apparently commanding troops in Syria when Elagabalus attempted to seize imperial power. The sources disagree on whether Iulianus acted on his own initiative or by orders of Macrinus. Iulianus' soldiers deserted to Elagabalus, cut off their commander's head and sent it back to Macri-

¹¹⁰ Howe (1942), 72–72.

¹¹¹ On Oclatinus Adventus' career, see also section 4.1; on Macrinus' career, see later in this section.

¹¹² Dio 80, 2, 2, pp. 480–481; Zosimus 1, 11, 2–3; Zonaras 12, 15. See Honoré (2002), 30–32; 35–36, with further references.

¹¹³ Howe (1942), 78–80, supplying further references. Cf. Körner (2002), 55–57; 72–74.

¹¹⁴ Cornelius Fuscus, prefect under Domitianus, commanded an army on the Dacian front: Suetonius, *Domit.* 6, 1; Dio 67, 6, 5–6; Eutropius, *Breviarium*, 7, 23; Orosius 7, 10, 4. Marcus Turbo as supreme commander in Pannonia and Dacia under Hadrianus (circa AD 119): Dio 69, 18; *HA, Vita Hadr.* 6, 7; 7, 3.

nus.¹¹⁵ In the 240s, when the Sassanids invaded Mesopotamia under Shapur I, a huge army marched to the East under Timesitheus, guard prefect of Gordianus III.¹¹⁶ As discussed in section 3.1, Timesitheus had gained experience as military chief under Severus Alexander, when he acted as deputy governor of Germania Inferior and commanded the legions XXX *Ulpia Victrix* and *I Minervia*.¹¹⁷ If we may believe the *Historia Augusta*, Timesitheus was rather good in communicating with military men and a very capable army commander, and so was *de facto* even more powerful than his son-in-law Gordianus III.¹¹⁸ After Timesitheus died, his successors Priscus and Philippus became Gordianus' greatest deputies during the disastrous campaign against the Persians in the winter of 243 / 244.¹¹⁹ Valerianus' prefect Successianus thus fought the Persians in the presence of the emperor, as they were captured together in 260. Yet Ballista, who may have been his colleague, is said to have campaigned successfully against the Persians as well. He clearly operated elsewhere, was not caught and defeated the enemy soon after.¹²⁰ Ten years later, *praefectus vigilum* Placidianus, who was commanding an army detachment in Gallia that had been sent against the Goths or the Gallic empire or against both by Claudius, was promoted to the position of praetorian prefect by Aurelianus. Considering the fact that the inscription mentioning Placidianus as prefect was found in Gallia, he obviously did not resign his command immediately.¹²¹ In 282, Probus' prefect Carus was commanding

¹¹⁵ Dio 79, 31; Herodianus 5, 4; *HA, Vita Macr.* 10, 1–3; Howe (1942), 26. Ulpianus probably commanded (troops from) *legio II Parthica*, Rome's strategic reserve which was usually stationed in Castra Albana in Italy. Iulianus' colleague Nestor apparently was in Syria at that time as well, as Dio (80, 3, 4) reports that he was killed there by Elagabalus soon after Macrinus' death. It is not recorded, however, whether he acted as commander of troops as well.

¹¹⁶ *HA, Vita Gord.* 26–27, 3.

¹¹⁷ On this combined appointment, see Pflaum (1960–1961), vol. 2, no. 317, 815–816.

¹¹⁸ *HA, Vita Gord.* 28.

¹¹⁹ Zosimus 1, 18; Zonaras 12, 18; Körner (2002), 72–74, for further references. *IGRR* 3, 1033 (Palmyra, AD 242 / 243), most probably refers to Priscus and demonstrates that he already was *praefectus praetorio* under Gordianus. However, it cannot be determined whether he already held the position when Timesitheus was still alive or only after his death. Körner (55–56), suggests that Priscus was in Palmyra in those years to make preparations for Gordianus' expedition against the Persians. Cf. Howe (1942), 109.

¹²⁰ Successianus: Zosimus 1, 32, 1–2; cf. *Res Gestae Divi Saporis* 11, translation Frye (1984), 372; Ballista: *HA, Vita Val.* 4, 4; *Vita Trig. Tyr.* 12, 1; 18; Zonaras 12, 23 (in which he is called Callistus). It is doubtful whether Ballista already was praetorian prefect under Valerianus, as he is only referred to as '*praefectus*' in *HA, Trig. Tyr.* 12, 1; 18, 13. According to Desbordes-Ratti (2000), 94, he was not.

¹²¹ According to *CIL* 12.2.2228 = *ILS* 569 (Gallia Narbonensis, AD 269), Placidianus was

troops in Raetia when he was acclaimed emperor, while Probus was in Sirmium following a stay in Rome to celebrate a triumph after having subdued mutinies on the Rhine and in Britannia.¹²² According to the *Historia Augusta*, Carus was trained as a general (*dux*) by Probus himself.¹²³

The legal basis for such military commands cannot be determined and it is not settled whether the praetorian prefects of the third century held a general command over the Roman army.¹²⁴ Moreover, it is unclear whether Italic troops were under the praetorian prefect's command. Dio makes Maecenas so advise Augustus, but, as is well known, whether this reflected the historical reality of the early third century, or a suggestion for a reform by Dio, is unclear.¹²⁵ From the reign of Septimius Severus the Italic troops included the *Vigiles*, the *equites singulares*, the troops in the *Castra Peregrina*, *legio II Parthica*, and the fleets which were based at Misenum and Ravenna.¹²⁶ It is generally accepted that a praetorian prefect commanded the soldiers of the *Castra Peregrina*, but there is no evidence that the *Vigiles* and their commander, the *praefectus vigilum*, were subordinate to him.¹²⁷ The fleets and legion *II Parthica* seem occasionally to have fought under the prefect's command. Didius Iulianus sent Crispinus to secure the fleet at Ravenna in 193, and Macrinus may have commanded the *legio II Parthica* during Caracalla's Parthian campaign in 216. By the time Caracalla was murdered, however, the command over *II Parthica* was no longer in Macrinus' hands, as Triccionius is reported as

in charge of *vexillationes* and *equites* as well as *praepositi et ducenarii protectores*. *CIL* 12.1551 (Gallia Narbonensis) mentions Placidianus as *praefectus praetorio* and is dated either 270 or 273.

¹²² Triumph of Probus: *HA, Vita Prob.* 19; acclamation of Carus and death of Probus: *HA, Vita Prob.* 21; Zonaras 12, 29. See Kreucher (2003), 183, with further references.

¹²³ *HA, Vita Prob.* 22, 3.

¹²⁴ Eich (2005), 214–215, points out that there is no evidence for a general command under the praetorian prefect. He argues that it is unlikely that it existed before the second half of the third century and that the information offered by sources for the second half of the period under discussion are too scanty to draw conclusions on this matter. Howe (1942), 25–26, asserts that such army commands originally were special delegations for particular campaigns. Cf. *RE* 22 (1954), s.v. *praefectus praetorio*, 2409 ff. Howe's detection of a tendency toward a more general delegation in the third century is controversial. See Eich (2005), 215, note 3.

¹²⁵ Dio 52, 24, 3.

¹²⁶ The urban cohorts, which were originally placed under the command of the *praefectus urbi*, may have been passed into the control of the praetorian prefect in the second century. Yet, they seem to have been commanded by the city prefect during the reign of Caracalla, as the resistance of the urban cohorts to the praetorians sent to kill city prefect Fabius Cilo (Dio 78, 4, 2–5) demonstrates. Cf. Howe (1942), 22–23.

¹²⁷ Eich (2005), 215–216, with further references.

this legion's *praefectus* at that point.¹²⁸ This indicates that the praetorian prefect had no permanent command over the legion. For now, it seems safe to argue that the praetorian prefect was the highest-ranking soldier in Italy in the third century, but that he was not necessarily the formal commander of all Italic troops.¹²⁹ Eich argues that a formal subordination was unnecessary: in effect, the praetorian prefect was the obvious man to lead military operations in Italy if rapid intervention was desired.¹³⁰ After all, no other commander could undermine the prefect's position in Italy by virtue of prestige. The only imperial of higher rank was the city prefect, whose authority was limited to the city of Rome.

It is noteworthy that most examples of praetorian prefects acting as commander-in-chief of a field army date from the second half of the third century. By then, there were of course more active field armies, though we must keep in mind that the available evidence on this period, mainly non-contemporary historiographical sources, which are themselves frequently excerpts of other historical works, emphasize the military events of those decades, which may have distorted our perceptions. Yet, the number of prefects who were appointed before 240 with evident military experience is not high. Flavius Genialis, prefect of Didius Iulianus, had probably been *tribunus* of a (praetorian) cohort in 185, but that is all we know of his career.¹³¹ Caracalla's prefect Oclatinus Adventus was obviously a *vir militaris*, whereas his colleague Macrinus allegedly endured regular mocking from Caracalla of his lack of military experience and bravery.¹³² As *principes* of the *Castra Peregrina* Adventus commanded the *frumentarii*, who functioned as a sort of secret police in Rome. According to Dio, Ulpius Iulianus and Iulianus Nestor, Macrinus' prefects, had served as *principes peregrinorum* under Septimius Severus or Caracalla

¹²⁸ Crispinus securing the fleet: *HA, Vita Did. Iul.* 6, 3–4. Tricicianus commanding *II Parthica*: Dio 79, 13, 4; *HA, Vita Car.* 6, 6. According to Eich (2005), 216, the reference to a soldier of *II Parthica* as *strator* of the praetorian prefect in *CIL* 6.3408 (Roma) is the only sign of permanent subordination of this legion to the prefect.

¹²⁹ See also Nicols (1988), who argues that the praetorian prefects played an important role as *patroni* in Italy and were therefore mentioned among men of senatorial rank at the Album of Canusium.

¹³⁰ Eich (2005), 216.

¹³¹ If he was indeed identical to the Genialis mentioned in *CIL* 6.214 (Roma), as Howe (1942), 68, no. 14, suggests. *CIL* 8.18065 = *ILS* 2452 = *AE* 1937, 157 (Numidia, AD 162), mentions a centurion of *III Augusta* who goes by the name Flavius Iuvenalis. He may have been identical with the prefect in 193. The interval of time, however, leaves it more likely that the *centurio* was the prefect's homonymous father.

¹³² Herodianus 4, 12, 1; on Oclatinus Adventus, see Rankov (1987), 244–245; see also section 4.1.

as well. Thus they had a similar military background.¹³³ It is noteworthy that all three of them are recorded as accompanying their emperors on military expeditions and may have commanded field armies during these campaigns. Then there is Comazon, who started his career as a soldier in Thracia during the reign of Commodus and was commander of *legio III Gallica* in Syria in 218, before he became Elagabalus' praetorian prefect.¹³⁴ Although very little is known of the career of almost half of the prefects appointed between 193 and 240, it may be concluded that military experience was no prerequisite: the appointments of jurists as praetorian prefects, which will be discussed in detail below, demonstrate that a career in the legal sphere could just as well lead to appointment as praetorian prefect in the Severan era. Moreover, as ever before, a considerable number of ex-prefects of Egypt were promoted to the rank of praetorian prefect, and in that way completed the equestrian *cursus*.¹³⁵

However, a relatively large number of the praetorian prefects appointed after AD 240 had military experience. As noted, Timesitheus had gained it under Severus Alexander in his Persian expedition and in the Rhine area. Priscus' and Philippus' careers before the prefecture have not been recovered, but their role in Gordianus' Persian wars renders it unlikely that they never held military positions before the prefecture. Successianus chased away invading Scythians (i.e. Goths) as prefect of a Roman garrison before Valerianus called him to Syria and appointed him praetorian prefect. Gallienus' prefect Volusianus, one of the few prefects whose career is almost entirely known to us, was a true *vir militaris*. As has been mentioned above, Placidianus was commanding troops before he became praetorian prefect. According to the *Historia Augusta*, Carus' career included both civil and military offices. Zonaras calls him 'brave and skilled in war', and another passage of the *Historia Augusta* refers to him as one of the generals trained by Probus. Finally, Flavius Aper,

¹³³ Dio 79, 15, 1.

¹³⁴ Dio 80, 3, 5.

¹³⁵ (1) Veturius Macrinus, *praefectus Aegypti* 181–183, may have been identical to the praetorian prefect in 193–200; (2) Aemilius Saturninus was governor in Egypt in 197–199 and praetorian prefect circa 200; (3) Maecius Laetus governed Egypt between 200 and 203 and was praetorian prefect between 205 and 211; (4) Iulius Basilianus is attested as *praefectus Aegypti* in 217–218, and subsequently became praetorian prefect in 218; (5) Geminus Chrestus was governor of Egypt in 219–220, and praetorian prefect in 222; (6) Domitius Honoratus was prefect of Egypt in 222, and praetorian prefect in 223; and (7) Aedinius Iulianus governed Egypt in 222–223, and became *praefectus praetorio* afterwards, probably circa 223. For more detailed information on these *praefecti Aegypti* and further references, see Jördens (2009), *passim*.

appointed prefect by Carus in the 280s, may have been identical with the homonymous man who was *praeses* in Pannonia Inferior and perhaps also *praepositus* of two legionary detachments under Gallienus.¹³⁶

In sum, third-century emperors deployed praetorian prefects more and more as troubleshooters, who headed military units and field armies while the emperors solved crises elsewhere. This the Severi did so occasionally, but such appointments became even more common from circa 240 onward. In times of need, the custom of the prefect accompanying the emperor on his journeys was apparently ignored. From Philip-pus' reign onward, another practice may have been altered: the available evidence indicates that emperors no longer (necessarily) appointed two simultaneously operating praetorian prefects. Of course, it must be taken into account that a lack of evidence may be rendering pairs of prefects untraceable. If true, however, this obviously raised the level of power which the single prefect could exercise: he now became the 'second man' in the Empire, without having to share this role. In addition, many praetorian prefects after the Severan era seem to have had a more concentrated military background. Logically, the increasing number of military crises, occurring simultaneously in various areas in the Empire, created a need for praetorian prefects who were capable of dealing with critical military situations by themselves. The military authority of the praetorian prefect thus seems to have increased, as he operated ever more independently over the course of the third century, especially in the second half. Whether this growing level of military power affected the non-military authority of the praetorian prefects will now be discussed.

The Power of the Praetorian Prefects: Non-military Authority

Beside military tasks, praetorian prefects had legal and civil-administrative duties. The prefects' jurisdiction had probably followed from their basic duty: as commanders of the imperial bodyguard, prefects had police powers in Rome. Accused men and prisoners were put under the prefect's control. Arrested men from the provinces, who were transported to

¹³⁶ For Timesitheus' career, see *CIL* 13.1807 = *ILS* 1330 (Gallia Lugdunensis); Pflaum (1960–1961), vol. 2, no. 317, 815–816, and section 3.1. On Priscus and Philippus, see Körner (2002), 54–59, 72–74; 366–367. Based on Zosimus 1, 18, 3, De Blois (2001), 140–141, posits that Philippus was a specialist in military logistics. On Successianus, see Zosimus 1.32, 1–2. On Volusianus: *CIL* 10.1706 (Puteoli, Italy); *PLRE* I, s.v. Volusianus 6; cf. section 4.2; Placidianus: *CIL* 12.2228 (Gallia Narbonensis). On Carus, see *HA, Vita Car.* 5, 4; *HA, Vita Prob.* 22, 3; Zonaras 12, 30; On Aper, see: *AE* 1936, 53; 54; 57 (Pannonia Superior); *CIL* 3.15156 (Pannonia Inferior); *PLRE* I, s.v. Aper 2; cf. Aper 3.

Rome, were handed over to him as well. In this capacity a prefect could also investigate cases of high treason.¹³⁷ As a member of the emperor's council, moreover, the prefect both assisted in administering justice and in formulating imperial policy, praetorian prefects having participated in the imperial council from the first century onward.¹³⁸ Whether the prefect's presence in the council was formalized at some point is disputed, but he seems to have participated on a regular basis *ex officio*.¹³⁹ Although little evidence explicitly mentions prefects in council meetings in the third century, it may be assumed that the prefects continued regularly to be present in the *consilium*, at least when they found themselves in the emperor's entourage.¹⁴⁰ Little can be said about the specific role of the praetorian prefect within the imperial *consilium*, but because senators participated in it as well, Mommsen's suggestion that the praetorian prefect acted as vice-president, chairing meetings in the emperor's absence, seems unlikely. Senators would probably never have accepted the equestrian as president of the council, due to his lower social status.¹⁴¹

By the late second century AD, praetorian prefects exercised independent jurisdiction in Italy. Septimius Severus confirmed their jurisdiction in Italy beyond the hundredth milestone from Rome and made the prefect president over a separate court of law in the capital, in which the prefect exercised both an original and, more regularly, appellate jurisdiction.¹⁴² The praetorian prefect's autonomous jurisdiction may have represented an expansion of his regular participation in the *consilium principis*,

¹³⁷ Cf. Plinius, *Epistulae* 10, 57; *HA, Vita Sev.* 4, 3; *Cod. Iust.* 4, 65, 4.

¹³⁸ See Crook (1975) and Amarelli (1983) for detailed studies of the imperial council. Seianus participating in Tiberius' *consilium*: Suetonius, *Tib.* 55. For further references, see Eich (2005), 218, note 4. Contra Howe (1942), 32, who claims that the earliest reference to prefects as regular members of the *consilium* was from the time of Marcus Aurelius, based on *HA, Vita Marc.* 11, 10.

¹³⁹ Cf. Eck (1998), 6.

¹⁴⁰ See Howe (1942), 32–33; Eich (2005), 218–219, on this matter.

¹⁴¹ Mommsen (1887), vol. 2, 990; 1121. Contra Mommsen, see Durry (1968), 175; Passerini (1939), 261; Crook (1975), 98–99; Eich (2005), 218–219, note 1; cf. Howe (1942), 33, who argues that it is hard to see why the council would ever meet without the emperor, since its function was to advise him.

¹⁴² See *CIL* 9.2438 = *AE* 1983, 331 (Saepinum, Italy) for the prefect's jurisdiction in Italy under Marcus Aurelius. On the jurisdiction of the *praefectus urbi* within Rome, see *Digesta* 1, 12, 1, 4, although one should of course be aware that it is uncertain whether the situation described here applies to the Severan era, when Ulpianus wrote the text, to Iustinianus' reign, or both. On the praetorian prefect's jurisdiction in Italy, see Howe (1942), 34–35, and Eich (2005), 216, note 5, for further references. Howe (1942), 34, compares the praetorian prefect's jurisdiction for Italy to the judicial authority possessed by *legati* in the imperial provinces.

but the emperors may also have delegated it to them.¹⁴³ From the beginning of the third century onward, the prefect's decisions could theoretically no longer be challenged, as the prefect acted as the representative of the emperor (*vice principis*).¹⁴⁴ Furthermore, the *Codex Iustinianus* indicates that in the third century the prefect exercised appellate jurisdiction in appeals against legal verdicts by (senatorial?) provincial governors. Severus Alexander decided that a governor could send accused men to his prefect Ulpianus for more severe punishment, while the emperor Gordianus confirmed that a man who was condemned by the governor could address the praetorian prefect for appeal.¹⁴⁵ It is not known, however, under which emperor this practice started, nor whether anyone could approach a prefect for appeal directly or only through imperial delegation. Either way, the right of appeal did not mean that the prefect had authority over the governors.

A constitution from the reign of Maximinus Thrax determined that a *forma* which was issued by a prefect was to be considered binding as long as it did not contradict existing laws and constitutions.¹⁴⁶ Although the exact significance of the constitution is unclear since the meaning of the word *forma* is disputed, it points at a further extension of the prefect's legal authority.¹⁴⁷

The expansion of the praetorian prefects' authorities in the legal sphere coincides with the appointment of jurists and juridically skilled bureaucrats as prefects in the Severan era.¹⁴⁸ Aemilius Papinianus belonged to

¹⁴³ In the early Principate prefects only had delegated jurisdiction, temporarily granted by the emperor. See Eich (2005), 217, note 1.

¹⁴⁴ Cf. *Digesta* 1, 11, 1, 1. Howe (1942), 35: 'In practice, however, appeals were granted by the emperors on rare occasions ... until Constantine finally settled the question by definitely forbidding them.' For the discussion on the possibility to appeal against decisions of the prefect, see Peachin (1996), 165–166.; 191–194; Eich (2005), 217, note 7, with further references.

¹⁴⁵ *Cod. Iust.* 4, 65, 4, 1; 9, 2, 6. Cf. 8, 40, 13, in which Gordianus decided that a *decurio* should hand over a criminal to the governor or guard prefect.

¹⁴⁶ *Cod. Iust.* 1, 26, 2: *formam a praefecto praetorio datam, et si generalis sit, minime legibus vel constitutionibus contrariam, si nihil postea ex auctoritate mea innovatum est, servari aequum est.* 'The rules promulgated by the praetorian prefect, even though they may be general in their character, must be observed, unless they contain something contrary to the laws or the constitutions, if they have not subsequently been annulled by my authority', translation S.P. Scott (1973).

¹⁴⁷ On the debate concerning the word *forma*, see Eich (2005), 219–221, with further references.

¹⁴⁸ See De Blois (2001), 136–137, on the difficulty of distinguishing juridically skilled administrators or bureaucrats from learned jurists who carried out tasks in the public service. Cf. Salway (1997), 152–153.

this category of men. As mentioned above, he had acted as *advocatus fisci* and a *libellis* before he became praetorian prefect in 205. According to Dio, Papinianus tried the case of robber Bulla Felix during his prefecture.¹⁴⁹ He was finally dismissed by Caracalla some time before the murder of Geta and killed not long thereafter in 212.¹⁵⁰ A certain Patruinus murdered along with Papinianus at the request of the praetorians, was probably also *praefectus praetorio* at that time, and was likely identical with the jurist and *procurator imperatoris* Valerius Patruinus.¹⁵¹ Macrinus had followed a legal career as well: Dio records that he had become known to Plautianus through the successful advocacy of a friend's case, and that Plautianus made him his private advocate, probably as *procurator* managing part of his private domains. According to the *Historia Augusta*, Macrinus was then appointed *advocatus fisci*, a position responsible for looking after the interests of the imperial treasury. It may be conjectured that it was Plautianus who recommended him for the job.¹⁵² Fabius Cilo prevented Macrinus from being executed after Plautianus' downfall, although he was perhaps exiled for a while.¹⁵³ Not long thereafter, however, Macrinus continued his career under Severus, became *praefectus vehiculorum*, *procurator rationis* and finally *praefectus praetorio* under Caracalla after Papinianus had been killed.¹⁵⁴ Macrinus spent most of his career in the capital and it is very likely that he met Severus' elder son at some point in his career. Finally, Ulpianus was an apprentice of Papinianus and member of his *consilium* (as discussed in section

¹⁴⁹ Dio 77, 10, 7.

¹⁵⁰ Dio 78, 1, 1; 4, 1; *HA, Vita Sev.* 21, 8; *Vita Car.* 4, 1–2; 8, 5–9.

¹⁵¹ Dio 78, 4, 1; *HA, Vita Car.* 4, 1–2.; *Digesta* 49, 14, 50. On Valerius Patruinus, see also Zwilwe (2003).

¹⁵² Dio 79, 11, 2, calls him *συνηγόρημα* which may mean *advocatus fisci*, but should probably be regarded as private advocate here. See Liddell-Scott (1996), 1715, s.v. *συνηγός*. Generally, it is assumed that Plautianus made him *procurator*, but it cannot be excluded that he held both positions, especially since *HA, Vita Macr.* 4, 4–6, reports that he was *advocatus fisci*.

¹⁵³ The fact that Dio (79, 11, 2) adds the words *παρὰ δόξαν* ('beyond expectation') indicates that Macrinus was not regarded an *amicus* of Cilo. The exile is only mentioned in *HA, Vita Macr.* 4, 3.

¹⁵⁴ According to *HA, Vita Diadum.* 4, 1, Macrinus was *procurator aerarii maioris* by the birth of his son Diadumenianus in 208. Since this was the only record of this office, it has been suggested that this was an error and that the author meant to refer to Macrinus' post as *procurator rationis/rei privatae*, which is recorded elsewhere in the *Historia Augusta* (*HA, Vita Macr.* 2, 1); on this matter, see Pflaum (1960–1961), vol. 2, 670, no. 248. Dio 79, 11, 3, also mentions several positions as *procurator*, but adds that Macrinus' held them under Caracalla. Pflaum (1960–1961), vol. 3, 1020, suggests that Macrinus may have held more than one procuratorship between 208 and 212.

3.1), and may have been *a libellis* under Severus. By the end of 222, he was appointed praetorian prefect by Severus Alexander.¹⁵⁵ Ulpianus is also attested as a member of the emperor's *consilium*, and in fact, several sources indicate that Ulpianus was an important adviser to the emperor, virtually co-regent.¹⁵⁶ Although we are told that he was made prefect because he was an outstanding jurist, Ulpianus was not popular among the soldiers and is said to have needed special protection on occasion from the emperor. A conflict with the military in Rome led to his death in 223 or 224.¹⁵⁷

Two other, less illustrious men can be added to the list of bureaucrats who were appointed praetorian prefect in the Severan era: Aurelius Iulianus, prefect under Severus, if he was indeed identical with the homonymous man who was *a rationibus* and *a memoria*; and a prefect under Elagabalus, . . . atus, whose full name is unknown to us, who had been *a studiis* prior to his prefecture.¹⁵⁸ Whether the extension of the prefect's legal authority resulted from the appointments of great jurists and legally skilled bureaucrats from the late second century onward, or whether the expansion of the prefecture in the legal sphere attracted jurists to the position, is unclear. Since military skilled men were also appointed to the prefecture in the Severan period, as discussed above, legal knowledge can be excluded as a *conditio sine qua non* for an *eques* who pursued the praetorian prefecture in those days.

For the civil-administrative duties of the praetorian prefects evidence is scarce and less persuasive. Eich proffers an inscription from Saepinum dated in the reign of Marcus Aurelius as a clue for the praetorian prefect's role in the imperial civil administration. In it *a rationibus* Cosmus calls for the help of guard prefect Bassaeus Rufus concerning a dispute. It may have been an informal request for advice, as Rufus had been *a rationibus* himself and probably knew Cosmus; or Rufus may have been involved, since he had disciplinary authority in Italy. According to Eich, however,

¹⁵⁵ *Cod. Iust.* 8, 37, 4; 4, 65, 4. According to *HA, Vita Elag.* 16, 5, Ulpianus was dismissed by Elagabalus, but it is unclear which position he held at that time and whether this statement is true. Aurelius Victor, *Liber de Caesaribus* 24, 6, seems to be mistaken when he reports that Elagabalus made Ulpianus praetorian prefect.

¹⁵⁶ Dio 80, 1, 1 (pp. 478–479); *HA, Vita Sev. Alex.* 26, 6; 31, 2; 68, 1. Cf. *Cod. Iust.* 4, 65, 4, 1 ('*parentem meum*'); 8, 37, 4 ('*amici mei*').

¹⁵⁷ Outstanding jurist: Zosimus 1, 11, 2. Unpopular among praetorians: *HA, Vita Sev. Alex.* 51, 4. On his death: Dio 80, 2, 2–4 (pp. 480–483).

¹⁵⁸ For Aurelius Iulianus, see *CIL* 5.4323 = *ILS* 1333 (Brixia, Italy); 14.2463 (Castrimoenium, Italy). For . . . atus, see *CIL* 6.31776a = *AE* 2003, 182 (Roma) and *CIL* 6.31776b = *AE* 1997, 75 (Roma). See also Salway (1997).

Cosmus addresses Rufus as though they both belonged to the imperial staff, and it should be read as an internal consultation. The praetorian prefect was of higher rank within the imperial staff and therefore had an executive role, perhaps coordinating the members of the staff, but Eich stresses that there is no indication either that the praetorian prefect had control over the *a rationibus*, nor that Cosmus was accountable to Rufus.¹⁵⁹

Dio, through Maecenas, claims that the praetorian prefect should represent the emperor in supervising the *caesariani*, punishing the members of the administrative personnel at the imperial court and officials in the provinces who did not do their duty. Again, however, it is unclear whether Dio is here reflecting Severan reality or proposing for a reform.¹⁶⁰ In the inscription from Aragua, mentioned in Chapter 1 (section 1.1), imperial *coloni* ask Philippus to end the violations of local *potentes*, administrators and soldiers marching by, and refer to a previous request for help during his prefecture.¹⁶¹ Still, it remains unclear whether they had approached him in his capacity as supervisor of the *caesariani*, or Gordianus had referred the *coloni* to his prefect. They may even have addressed Philippus just because he had been in the area at that time.

Owing to the growing number of military crises, the emperors required ever more resources. Therefore, the *annona militaris*, which was raised as a special tax presumably by Septimius Severus and paid in kind, gradually became the most important tax. In due course, the administration of the *annona militaris* was transferred to the praetorian prefects, who exercised got the final responsibility for the collection of this tax and had to coordinate provincial governors' tax collection.¹⁶² However, it is unclear when the praetorian prefect became involved with levying this tax, with most scholars nowadays positing a transfer after AD 284.¹⁶³

¹⁵⁹ Eich (2005), 224–229 on *CIL* 9.2438 = *AE* 1983, 331 (Saepinum, Italy). Cf. Millar (1986), 312: 'The Praetorian Prefects, however, clearly could and did warn the local magistrates to desist from police activities which were damaging to the Imperial wealth.'

¹⁶⁰ Dio 52, 24, 4. Ps.-Paulus, *Sententiae* 5, 17, 11, a source from the late third century, attests that the praetorian prefect at that point had the authority to punish the *officiales* of procurators. Eich (2005), 228: 'Diese *officiales* werden wohl ebenfalls als *caesariani* anzusehen sein.'

¹⁶¹ *CIL* 3.14191 (Asia).

¹⁶² *HA*, *Vita Av. Cass.* 5, 8; *Vita Gord.* 28, 2; *Vita Trig. Tyr.* 18; *Vita Prob.* 10, 6–7; *Zosimus* 2, 32, 2.

¹⁶³ In the past, scholars believed that the control over the military *annona* was transferred to the praetorian prefect under Severus. See Howe (1942), 29, note 28, with further references. Nowadays the more accepted view on this matter is that the *annona* probably

Although the paucity of evidence precludes definite conclusions, there are indications that at certain moments in the third century some praetorian prefects saw their authority in the civil-administrative sphere somewhat increase. Yet the evidence is so scarce that it cannot be established whether this actually subordinated civil officials to the prefect. Furthermore, it is hard to determine whether this points to further formal and structural growth of the civil-administrative authorities of the praetorian prefect in the third century, or emperors used the prefects as civil-administration coordinators *vice Caesaris* only on an occasional, *ad hoc* basis.¹⁶⁴

To conclude, in the first decades of the period under discussion, under the Severan emperors, we can detect an expansion of the praetorian prefects' authority in the legal sphere. The praetorian prefects' jurisdiction within Italy had grown gradually as they became presidents of their own court of law in Rome, acting *vice principis* and being able to appeal against verdicts of provincial governors. Besides independent jurisdiction, from beyond the hundredth milestone from Rome, the praetorian prefects also were the highest-ranking military officers in Italy. The expansion of judicial authority obviously coincides with the prime of renowned jurists and legally skilled bureaucrats, but it cannot be determined whether their rise was the cause for the increasing legal responsibilities, or its consequence. In the Severan era, prefects continued to fulfill their basic task of protecting the imperial family and joining the emperors on military campaigns.

Yet, from about 240 onward, praetorian prefects increasingly received extraordinary commands, in which they had to solve military crises without the emperor's direct guidance. Such army commands were likely, at least initially, special delegations for particular campaigns. In this capacity, the praetorian prefect also acted *vice Caesaris*, being deployed when the emperor was not capable of solving a problem himself. The available evidence suggests that from the 240s onward it was no longer standard to appoint two prefects. Although this had occurred occasionally before, it

remained a special tax until at least 284 and that the way it was collected was not standardized before the age of the Tetrarchy. See Jones (1964), vol. 1, 50; 449; Mitthof (2001); Eich (2005), 238, note 3, with further references. Carlà (2007), however, expresses a different view and argues the responsibility over the *annona militaris* was transferred to the praetorian prefect in the course of the second century.

¹⁶⁴ Cf. Eich (2005), 229–235.

now seems to have become more common. Having two praetorian prefects had always acted as a mechanism for keeping the prefects' power in check. Perhaps the emperors realized that the prefect, as he had increasingly to act *vice Caesaris*, needed a higher level of autonomous power. Here too, however, it is difficult to distinguish cause from consequence. For now, the reason for the more frequent appointment of sole prefects remains obscure.

In the civil-administrative sphere, the prefect may have acted as the emperor's deputy occasionally as well, as there are indications—though scanty—that he at times had an executive role in the imperial staff.

Thus, the praetorian prefect's power gradually increased, as he operated ever more autonomously. In addition, the praetorian prefect functioned ever more as the emperor's personal assistant, or even his prime minister, who could represent the emperor when the latter was not willing or able to solve a situation himself. While the emperors' priorities changed, the scope of the praetorian prefect's power seems to have broadened, as he could be sent into action in any place where the emperor needed him. The praetorian prefect's power thus decreasingly required the emperor's vicinity. His power was second only to the emperor's. It cannot, however, be established whether the third-century expansion of the prefect's duties was formal and permanent, or the prefect continued to operate *vice principis* as a delegate of the emperor.

The Status of the Praetorian Prefect

By the end of the reign of Constantine, in AD 337, the praetorian prefecture and the other high-ranking equestrian prefectures carried senatorial status. This section focuses on the process that led to this elevation of status.¹⁶⁵

From viri eminentissimi to viri clarissimi: The Process of Honoring Praetorian Prefects

From the Augustan era, there was a tension between the actual power of the praetorian prefecture and the social status attached to the office. The equestrian status of the praetorian prefects guaranteed social inferi-

¹⁶⁵ Over the last decades, several studies have examined the changing practices of honoring prefects from Septimius Severus to Constantine. See Pflaum (1970); Chastagnol (1988); Christol (1999); Benoist (2000). See most recently Salway (2006) with further references at p. 115.

ority to even the most junior members of the senatorial order. According to Salway, the negative example of Aelius Seianus reinforced the general principle that simultaneous performance of both a public magistracy like a consulate and service in one of the great equestrian prefectures was incompatible.¹⁶⁶ Seianus, originally appointed co-prefect with his father by Tiberius in AD 14, became sole prefect when his father was sent off to govern Egypt. Seianus was granted *ornamenta praetoria* (the insignia of the praetorship). After Tiberius' retreat to Capri, Seianus stayed behind in Rome and effectively acted as the emperor's viceroy. In January 31, Seianus was *consul ordinarius* with the emperor Tiberius as his colleague, all the while continuing in his post as praetorian prefect. Eventually, of course, Tiberius disposed of Seianus: persuaded that his prefect now threatened his own imperial position, the emperor executed him. The well-known example of Seianus illustrates the danger of allowing a prefect to combine the social prestige of senatorial status with the power and influence of the praetorian prefecture. During the remainder of the first century AD, tenure of the prefecture became considered incompatible with membership of the senate. Serving prefects could still be awarded senatorial *ornamenta*, but the established sociopolitical hierarchy required an equestrian prefect to retire from his post before embarking on a senatorial *cursus honorum*. In this way, praetorian prefects held inferior social rank, whatever actual power they exercised.¹⁶⁷

In the second century, the Antonine emperors rewarded some praetorian prefects with *ornamenta consularia* (the insignia of the consulship) while still in office. These emperors furthermore allowed prefects who had received these senatorial *ornamenta* to replace the epithet *eminentissimus* with the senatorial title *clarissimus*.¹⁶⁸ The grant of senatorial *ornamenta* only permitted the holder the symbols and titles of a senator, but not full membership in the order. Thus, the longstanding principle that entry into the senate was incompatible with simultaneous exercise of the praetorian prefecture preserved the social distinction between the senatorial and equestrian orders established in the Julio-Claudian period.

¹⁶⁶ Salway (2006), 117–118.

¹⁶⁷ Salway (2006) 118–119, for examples of equestrian prefects who were granted senatorial *ornamenta*. Salway also points out (119) that under the Flavians a couple of men became praetorian prefects, who were already senators at the time of their appointments, namely the future emperor Titus and his brother-in-law Arrecinus Clemens.

¹⁶⁸ See Salway (2006), 119, note 21, for examples.

Under Septimius Severus, the praetorian prefect Fulvius Plautianus managed to obtain a position comparable to that of Seianus.¹⁶⁹ Closely associated with the emperor through their common origin in Lepcis Magna and an alleged familial relationship, Plautianus was *praefectus vigillum* before he was promoted to the praetorian prefecture.¹⁷⁰ As praetorian prefect, he was granted *ornamenta consularia* in 197, and probably became sole prefect after the death of his colleague Aemilius Saturninus circa 200.¹⁷¹ Two years later, he further enhanced his position by attaching himself to the imperial family through the marriage of his daughter Plautilla to Caracalla. Thereupon, Plautianus was treated as a full member of the *domus divina* in public dedications. In 203, when he obtained an ordinary consulship, Plautianus officially became a senator, and his family was even enrolled as patrician.¹⁷² The consular pair of 203 was presented as *C. Fulvius Plautianus II P. Septimius Geta II*, treating Plautianus' prior consular *ornamenta* as equivalent to a genuine previous tenure of the magistracy and relegating Severus' brother's name to the second position. No doubt Severus offended the senatorial order by doing all this. Plautianus' consulship was contrary to the usual practice: while his consulship made Plautianus a full member of the senate, he continued to serve as prefect until his death. A Roman inscription even accidentally honors him as fourth emperor, alongside Severus, Caracalla and Geta.¹⁷³ It may be assumed that the statue incident discussed above took place at about the same time.¹⁷⁴ As said above, a final split between the emperor and Plautianus in January 205 ended in the prefect's death. His memory was damned and custom restored, as Herodianus emphasized, when two praetorian prefects replaced him.¹⁷⁵

Caracalla did not honor a prefect in office with membership in the senate, but he clearly promoted two ex-equestrians, holders of consular *ornamenta*, to ordinary consulships that were considered iterations. One of them, Maecius Laetus, *consul II* in 215, had been praetorian prefect under Severus; the other, Messius Extricatus, is attested as *praefectus*

¹⁶⁹ Dio 58, 14, 1, explicitly compares Plautianus to Seianus.

¹⁷⁰ Herodianus 3, 10, 6. Severus and Plautianus were probably related through Severus' mother Fulvia Pia. See Birley (1988), 221, no. 32.

¹⁷¹ In *CIL* 6.224 (Roma, June AD 197) Plautianus is attested as *vir clarissimus*. Howe (1942), 70–71, assumes there were successors of Saturninus as colleagues of Plautianus.

¹⁷² *CIL* 6.226 (Roma, AD 202); *CIL* 11.8050 = *ILS* 9003 (Tuficum, Italy).

¹⁷³ *CIL* 6.227 = *ILS* 427 (Roma).

¹⁷⁴ Dio 76, 16, 2; *HA, Vita Sev.* 14, 5–6.

¹⁷⁵ Herodianus 3, 13, 1. On Plautianus' *damnatio memoriae*, see Varner (2004), 161–164 with further references.

annonae in 210, was perhaps praetorian prefect under Caracalla, and became *consul II* in 217.¹⁷⁶ Caracalla's grant of *ornamenta consularia* to his praetorian prefects Oclatinus Adventus and Macrinus conformed to Antonine practice. Macrinus seems to have attempted to prevent his *ornamenta* from being included in the count for his consulship in 218, because he did not want to offend senators any further.¹⁷⁷ Under Elagabalus, however, the practice of counting consular *ornamenta* as genuine tenures continued: the emperor apparently allowed Comazon his iteration. Thereafter, however, there are no unambiguously attested examples of the practice.¹⁷⁸ Neither Caracalla nor Elagabalus appointed serving equestrian prefects into senatorial offices.¹⁷⁹

Just as the *Historia Augusta's* testimony that Elagabalus enrolled people into the senate without distinction as to age, status or type finds little confirmation,¹⁸⁰ so its statement of Severus Alexander's policy with regard to his praetorian prefects is doubtful as well:

His prefects of the guard he would promote to the rank of senator in order that they might belong to the class of The Illustrious (Lat: *clarissimi*) and be so addressed. Previous to his time such promotions had been made rarely, or, if made at all, had been of short duration [...] Alexander, however, in wishing the prefects to be senators had this end in view, namely, that no one might pass judgment on a Roman senator who was not a senator himself.¹⁸¹

It suggests that Severus Alexander introduced a policy of making his praetorian prefects senators. The account, however, wrongly supposes

¹⁷⁶ See Salway (1997), 148–153, for a reconstruction of the careers of Laetus (*PIR*² M 54) and Extricus (*PIR*² M 518). Laetus succeeded Plautianus as prefect in 205. The exact year of his replacement is unclear, but he certainly was no longer a praetorian prefect at the time of his consulship in 215. In inscriptions, Laetus preceded his colleague M. Munatius Sulla Cerialis (*AE* 1984, 178, Italy: 'Maecio Laeto II et Sulla Cerialis cos.'). *AE* 1959, 308 = *AE* 2003, 1512 (Italy) and *AE* 1998, 1618: 'Laeto II et Cerialis cos.', whereas Extricus ceded precedence to the younger patrician senator C. Bruttius Praesens (*CIL* 6.1984 = *ILS* 5025 (Roma): 'C. Bruttio Praesente, T. Messio Extricato II cos.'). Cf. Salway (2006), 124.

¹⁷⁷ Dio 79, 13, 1–2, praises him for the attempt.

¹⁷⁸ Salway (2006), 127, note 63, argues that prior *ornamenta* are improbable for M. Aurelius Carus, *consul II* in 283, and C. Valerius Diocletianus, *consul II* in 285. It is more likely that these iterations arose from suffect consulships on their elevations to the throne in 282 and 284. See Rémy (1976–1977), 175–176; Chastagnol (1992), 228–229.

¹⁷⁹ As said, Laetus and Extricus had both retired from equestrian service before their consulships, and Comazon combined the praetorian prefecture with the *ornamenta consularia* and his senatorial consulship with the urban prefecture in 220.

¹⁸⁰ *HA, Vita Elag.* 6, 2.

¹⁸¹ *HA, Vita Sev. Alex.* 21, 3–5. On this passage, see Chastagnol (1970).

that praetorian prefects had only rarely been *clarissimi* before the reign of Severus Alexander and falsely equates senatorial *ornamenta* with full membership of the senate. Although some have appealed to the Album of Canusium to support the notion that Alexander gave his prefects senatorial dignity on their appointment, Nicols' view of the document, that the praetorian prefects played an important role as *patroni* in Italy and were therefore listed as men of senatorial rank, provides a plausible alternative explanation for this abnormality.¹⁸² In fact no source from Severus Alexander's reign equates prior *ornamenta* with a properly held consulship.

All known praetorian prefects from Alexander's later years up to Gallienus' sole reign were *eminentissimi*. There is no evidence that any praetorian prefect received *ornamenta* or senatorial membership through appointment as consul. Since the mounting tension between senators and *equites* manifested itself in the senatorial revolt of 238, it is no surprise that the emperors hesitated to grant their praetorian prefects senatorial status between the late 230s and the 260s. Perhaps the prefects themselves also avoided the impression that they wanted to share in the traditional senatorial prestige for a while. By no means, however, did this signal political weakness: Timesitheus, for instance, was just as powerful as Plautianus had been, and perhaps even more powerful, since his son-in-law the teenage emperor Gordianus III must have been more compliant than the mature Septimius Severus. Yet Timesitheus remained an *eques*.¹⁸³ The same applies to Priscus: while even after his brother Philipus had replaced Gordianus as emperor in 244, Priscus continued in office as *praefectus praetorio*, while *de facto* ruling the Eastern part of the Empire, nonetheless, as far as we know, he never became a *vir clarissimus*.¹⁸⁴ Praetorian prefects' complete avoidance of senatorial honors, even those who were very closely connected to the imperial throne, may not only have been a consequence of the events in 238: it may also indicate a certain devaluation of senatorial status in this period.

Unfortunately, the 250s present a lacuna in information on praetorian prefects and their status.¹⁸⁵ The first known case in which a serving prefect was granted senatorial honors again can be found during Gallienus'

¹⁸² Nicols (1988), 126, suggests that those men appear in the Album as *clarissimi viri* because they had been awarded senatorial *ornamenta*.

¹⁸³ *CIL* 6.1611 = 31831 (Roma, undated) credits Timesitheus as *eminentissimus vir*.

¹⁸⁴ Priscus as *vir eminentissimus*: *CIL* 3.14149, 05 = *ILS* 9005 (Arabia, 246).

¹⁸⁵ Salway (2006), 128, points out that the appointments of Ulpianus and Porcius Aelianus, both *eminentissimi*, may have belonged to this decade.

sole reign. By then, the prevailing tendency to avoid senatorial honors for prefects in office seems to have come to an end. In 261, Gallienus shared the ordinary consulship with his praetorian prefect Petronius Taurus Volusianus.¹⁸⁶ Obviously, Volusianus ceded precedence to the emperor in the proclamation of the consuls, so precedence was not an issue. Neither was the pseudo-iteration, since the practice of granting *ornamenta consularia* had by then apparently ceased to exist. Like Comazon, Volusianus switched to the senatorial *cursus honorum*: he became urban prefect in 267–268. However, Heraclianus, the only other known praetorian prefect of Gallienus, did not become consul and thus remained an *eminentissimus vir*, so apparently Gallienus did not grant his prefects senatorial honors as a matter of general policy.¹⁸⁷

Aurelianus also appointed a serving praetorian prefect to an ordinary consulship: Iulius Placidianus in 273. In an inscription from Gallia Narbonensis, Placidianus is attested as praetorian prefect and *vir clarissimus*.¹⁸⁸ There appears to be no warrant for positing prior *ornamenta*, as there is no evidence for iteration. Yet, the order in which the consuls were proclaimed, with the patrician senator preceding the senior equestrian official (*Tacitus et Placidianus cos.*), shows that senatorial sensibilities were taken into consideration.¹⁸⁹ Thus, from 260 onward, a new practice emerged: praetorian prefects were nominated directly to the consulship and this appointment became their entry to senatorial status.¹⁹⁰ These prefect-consuls retained their offices as consulars. This situation exhibited more clarity than the Severan practice of a genuine consulship following consular *ornamenta*, and it may have actually reaffirmed the value of senatorial dignity for the effective political *potentes*.

Under Diocletian, the situation showed no drastic change. Before 284, more than one consular ex-prefect had already reached the urban prefecture (i.e. Comazon, Volusianus). During the reign of Diocletian some consular ex-prefects became not only urban prefects, but also proconsuls of Africa or Asia, which in fact reaffirmed the superior social prestige of

¹⁸⁶ *CIL* 11.5749 = *ILS* 7221 = *AE* 1992, 562 (Sentinum, Italy); *HA, Vita Gall.* 1, 2.

¹⁸⁷ *AE* 1948, 55 (Thracia).

¹⁸⁸ *CIL* 12.1551 (Gallia Narbonensis).

¹⁸⁹ According to Christol (1986), 111–113; 153–158, the consul Tacitus is to be identified with A. Caecina Tacitus.

¹⁹⁰ This new practice also applied to other high equestrian prefects: in 275, Iulius Marcellinus, prefect of Egypt in 271, prefect of Mesopotamia and *rector Orientis* in 272, was appointed *consul ordinarius* with the emperor Aurelianus as his colleague. See *PIR*² A 1546; I 403; *PLRE* I, Marcellinus 1; 2; 19; 20; 21; Christol (1986), 113–114. Cf. Salway (2000), 129.

these high senatorial positions. Eventually, the upper stages of the senatorial and equestrian careers converged during the reign of Constantine, as he granted the title *vir clarissimus* and thus senatorial dignity to all praetorian prefects and some other high equestrian prefects.¹⁹¹

Some Implications: Praetorian Prefects and Senators in the Imperial Service

In 203, when Septimius Severus appointed Plautianus consul during his prefecture, thereby granting him entry into the senate, this decision encountered opposition from one faction in the palace, including Caracalla and Iulia Domna. It is hardly surprising that the majority of Severus' entourage, which included a considerable number of senators, was not amused. The actual power and influence of a praetorian prefect had always depended on the personality of both him and his emperor, but until then the prefect's social inferiority to the traditional senatorial aristocracy had restricted it.¹⁹² The resistance against Plautianus' growing power doubtlessly derived from his overwhelming power and his senatorial status in an era in which senators still dominated both the imperial entourage and the essential military and administrative posts. That explains why the later emperors of the Severan era were much more cautious in granting their prefects senatorial status.

At the end of the 230s and in the 240s, neither senatorial *ornamenta* nor full membership in the senate through consulates were assigned to the praetorian prefects, definitely in reaction to the events in 238. Yet by the 260s, the tide had turned, for by then, as discussed in the previous chapter, the senators tended to focus on Italy, Africa and Asia, as the main areas where they exercised power. Great military commands went into equestrian rather than senatorial hands, which had largely reduced the military influence of the senators in the imperial service, as will be further discussed in Chapter 4. It was in those days also that the practice of nominating sitting prefects as consul was re-established. It is noteworthy that by then the authority of praetorian prefects, certainly in the military and legal sphere, had also increased in comparison with the end of the second century AD.

¹⁹¹ On the period AD 284–337, see also Chastagnol (1970), 52–59; Salway (2006), 128–133.

¹⁹² The only exception to this rule was Seianus, whose position has been discussed above.

Senatorial status will not have added much to the authority of the praetorian prefect in his contacts with military commanders: the military cadre basically consisted of *equites* and the praetorian prefect had since long been the highest-ranking equestrian official. Yet, in his relation with the senators senatorial status and even actual membership of the senate may have expanded the praetorian prefect's authority. At the same time when the prefect's jurisdiction within Italy had been extended, the civil-administrative role of senators within Italy had increased, as senators were acting as *correctores* and *curatores* within communities. Viewed from that perspective, senatorial status for a praetorian prefect who operated within Italy may have been desirable. Volusianus' promotion to senatorial rank, for instance, may have been intended as a way to increase his authority over senators in Rome and Italy. If Volusianus acted as counterpart to the senatorial men in Italy, who will have attached great importance to senatorial status and who had become acquainted with him as an equestrian *vir militaris* when he commanded Roman cohorts in the 250s, an elevation of Volusianus' status would have lent him the necessary authority to control senators in the imperial service serving in Italy. Seen from that point of view, the remark of the *Historia Augusta* that Severus Alexander gave his praetorian prefects senatorial rank (*senatoria dignitas*) lest no Roman senator would be judged by someone who was not a senator ('*ne quis non senator de Romano senator iudicaret*'), may have been nearer to the truth than initially thought and generally assumed by most scholars, although the imperial policy was clearly dated too early in the third century and ascribed to the wrong emperor.¹⁹³

This situation was not necessarily restricted to Italy. As discussed above, the praetorian prefect could appeal the verdict of a provincial governor at least from the reign of Gordianus III onward. In practice, this implied that the jurisdiction of senatorial governors was open to challenge from the praetorian prefect, a man who had great power, but was of inferior social status.¹⁹⁴ It must have been hard for the senators to accept this situation, especially for the senatorial elite discussed in Chapter 2. The fact, however, that the praetorian prefect acted *vice principis*, as delegate of the emperor, may have mitigated senators' loss of power and sense of degradation. By 260, the process of replacing senatorial

¹⁹³ HA, *Vita Sev. Alex.* 21, 3–5.

¹⁹⁴ In the late 230s and early 240s, senatorial governors had not yet been replaced as regularly with equestrian *agentes vice praesidis* or *praesides* as from the 260s onward.

members of the imperial staff by equestrian men was in an advanced stage. Yet, Gallienus still chose to grant Volusianus both senatorial rank and actual entry into the senate. As noted above, this may have enabled the praetorian prefect to stand up against the senatorial elite in Italy, and perhaps even ended the need for imperial delegation. If so, this step simplified the process. While Gallienus was busy solving military crises, there was no need for him to delegate judicial and perhaps even civil-administrative tasks to his praetorian prefect who was active in Italy: the elevation of rank enabled the prefect to act on his own authority. Although by 260, the time may have been ripe for this move, this remains merely a conjecture for the moment, and we must note that the occasional status elevation of praetorian prefects may still have appeared to contemporaries to be a reward or a consequence of their increased authority, preventing the occurrence of status dissonance.¹⁹⁵

The careful process by which the third-century emperors gradually elevated the status of the praetorian prefects toward senatorial dignity makes clear that, although the social structure in the Empire had by then become less rigid, the rulers still had to be cautious not to offend the senatorial aristocracy with too progressive reforms. It was not until Constantine, about half a century after the reign of Gallienus, senatorial status was granted to *all* the praetorian prefects and other high equestrians.¹⁹⁶

Praetorian Prefects and Emperors

The growing power and status of the praetorian prefect in the course of the third century coincided with shifts in the social and career background of the *Augusti* who ruled the Empire between 193 and 284 and their priorities. As has been discussed in Chapter 1, emperors were prevalently senatorial until the reign of Gallienus. Macrinus, Maximinus Thrax and Philippos Arabs were the only emperors before 268 who clearly had equestrian status at the time of their proclamation. Both Macrinus

¹⁹⁵ Cf. Peachin (1996), 161: '[...] the practice of appointing substitutes had, by the early third century, already long existed. However, we find, beginning with the Severans, a seemingly greater frequency of the practice, and this was accompanied by a tendency to allow people of lesser or, in Roman terms, a more inappropriate status to function thus.' The necessity of imperial delegation as the basis of the praetorian prefect's authority has socio-political implications that I intend to examine in greater depth in future research.

¹⁹⁶ Cf. Eich (2005), 239–241, who, with the example of Africa, demonstrates that even in the fourth century emperors avoided offending the traditional aristocracy by depriving them of traditional offices in favor of equestrian officials.

and Philippus were praetorian prefects when they were acclaimed. Most emperors who reigned between 268 and 284, on the other hand, had equestrian status when they were proclaimed. This indicates that senatorial status gradually faded as an essential factor for acclamation as emperor. An important step in the process of granting sitting prefects senatorial dignity can be traced under Gallienus' sole emperors as well. This implies that senatorial status no longer served to distinguish an emperor from praetorian prefect(s). A few emperors had had praetorian prefects of equal social ranks in the first half of the third century, but this equality became more or less continuous by the 260s. This may explain why praetorian prefects did not automatically receive senatorial rank between 268 and 284. All the emperors in this period, however, assumed senatorial rank soon after their acclamation and held ordinary consulships to affirm their membership of the senate, which reflects the value still attached to senatorial status, at least in certain circles. Thus, the distinction in social status between the praetorian prefect and the emperor appears to have been marginal in the last decades of the period under scrutiny.¹⁹⁷

As for praetorian prefects' power, the available evidence displays an increasing focus on legal and bureaucratic duties in the age of the Severi, followed by a period in which the praetorian prefect appears primarily in military contexts.¹⁹⁸ It is notable that the pre-imperial careers of both Septimius Severus and Macrinus were juridically and bureaucratically oriented. The other emperors of the Severan era owed their acclamation to dynastic connections; they were proclaimed at a young age before being eligible to hold any positions. In those first decades of the third century, several praetorian prefects were lawyers or juridically skilled bureaucrats. In contemporary literary evidence legal expertise constituted practically the ideal talent for a prefect. In 235, Maximinus Thrax was the first emperor, as far as we know, whose previous career consisted solely of military positions, and he is the first of a series of third-century emperors whose military skills and experience are emphasized

¹⁹⁷ I hope to return to the reasons for and consequences of the shift of the praetorian prefects' power and status in a later publication.

¹⁹⁸ Again, this conclusion might be biased by the surviving evidence. However, it is striking that people with very clear expertise in legal matters could rise to the praetorian prefecture under the Severi and that later praetorian prefects mainly used their military expertise. This obviously leaves open the possibility that these military prefects also interfered in legal and bureaucratic matters, but it was clearly no longer their main area of expertise. Cf. Honoré (1994); De Blois (2001).

in the available evidence. Admittedly, the cause of the shift may lie in the fact that the sources on the second half of the third century tend to stress military experience. Yet it is striking that the same increasing focus, first on legal and bureaucratic authorities, later on military authority, can be traced if we examine the power exercised by the third-century praetorian prefects.

From circa 240 onward, the emperors' priorities changed drastically and they no longer seem to have been able to divide their attention between military, civil-administrative, diplomatic and legal matters. Ever more occupied with waging war and solving problems in border regions, emperors increasingly assigned praetorian prefects to carry out duties which had previously been reserved for the emperor. As ever before during the Principate, it is complicated to determine whether tasks were added to the range of individual prefects' duties, or the responsibilities of the praetorian prefecture as an office were extended, which would imply that when a task was assigned to one prefect, it automatically belonged to the job responsibilities of the next. Here, we run into the same obstacle that we face with regard to emperorship: the position was never constitutionally specified. This prevents us from establishing whether the prefect should be regarded a magistrate with *imperium* acting on his own authority, or whether he always acted *vice Caesaris*, based on special delegation by the emperor which was only temporarily legitimate. Although some developments indicate an increase of personal authority, as demonstrated above, the evidence offers no clear answer to this question: the exact legal status of the prefect cannot be established. What can be established, however, is that the changes in the position of the praetorian prefect mirrored changes in the background and priorities of the emperors, and that in the second half of the third century prefects increasingly operated separately from the emperor and the imperial entourage, as they mainly solved military crises.

From the reign of Philippus, long-term habitation in the capital was no longer an option for emperors. Military crises in various parts of the Empire forced emperors to focus on either the East or the West, and to either disregard the problems in other parts of the Empire or to send a trustworthy deputy to resolve critical situations. In the latter case, emperors obviously preferred to send a relative or, if no family member was available, a praetorian prefect as his deputy. Philippus sent Priscus, who conveniently was both a relative and his praetorian prefect, to the East while he himself concentrated on the war against the Carpi and Germanic tribes. Volusianus covered Italy while Gallienus fought against

the Goths and Heruli in the Balkans. Aurelianus had Placidianus fight in Gallia Narbonensis while he himself was in the East.

As in earlier periods of the Principate, third-century emperors regularly chose relatives as prefects, if they were available. The reason for this practice was evident: a relative was naturally bound to the emperor and thus considered a loyal ally. Occasionally, however, it happened the other way around: a prefect could be brought into the imperial family. The implications of prefects' entry into the imperial family are less evident than the practice of appointing a relative as praetorian prefect. It may have expressed the emperor's trust of the prefect or secured loyalty. Perhaps the intention was to elevate a prefect's status without actually granting him senatorial status. A prefect who was allied to the imperial family would certainly be more acceptable to senators as an emperor's deputy.

In sum, third-century developments in emperorship and the prefecture were strongly connected and interdependent. As in previous centuries, the power and status of the praetorian prefect in the third century largely depended on the nature and authority of the emperor he served. Yet, while Seianus under Tiberius, and both Perennis and Cleander under Commodus, mainly profited from their rulers' lack of interest in governance—if we may believe the literary evidence—the praetorian prefects of the third-century owed their expanding positions to external factors which occupied emperors and undermined their authority increasingly.¹⁹⁹ It was probably due to these circumstances that prefects assumed ever more imperial tasks, first mainly in the legal and bureaucratic sphere, and later also in military crises. Gradually, the prefect's authority was extended. Whether he continued to operate *vice principis*, as imperial delegate, or whether his power developed toward a personal authority (*imperium*) would be interesting information to have. Unfortunately, however, as so often with third-century material, the available evidence does not enable us to draw conclusions on this matter. It does seem clear that ultimately, the prefect was the second most important man of the Empire, whose social status was second only to the emperor—and even the emperor could not always outdo him.

¹⁹⁹ On Seianus under Tiberius, see Hennig (1975); Levick (1976). On Perennis and Cleander under Commodus, see Hekster (2002), 60–77.

3.4. *Conclusion*

As was noted at the beginning of this chapter, the *ordo equester* was an even more heterogeneous group than the *ordo senatorius*. Focusing on those equestrians at the very top of Roman imperial administration who saw their power increase, two main trends can be detected. One already started well before the period under discussion: intellectuals from the Greek and Latin world replaced imperial freedmen as imperial secretaries. Under the Severan emperors, sophists and jurists still played an important role at court. They had a relatively high status within the *ordo*. As imperial secretaries they held the title *vir perfectissimus*, and they often attained the highest equestrian prefectures or could even gain admission into the senate. Their rhetorical and intellectual qualities, which their high status generally allowed them to develop, made them exceptionally qualified candidates to perform secretarial duties for the emperor. In other words, taking the perspective of Dahl's power aspect, we may say that the power of this group of *equites* seems to have been based primarily on their education, i.e. their *paideia*, and their scholarly reputation. Civil-administrative, financial and legal responsibilities fell within the scope of their power. In that respect, their role was comparable to that of the senatorial elite discussed in Chapter 2. However, whereas the senatorial elite may have profited from the shift of priorities from the center to the periphery and the emperor's increasing absence from Rome, equestrian intellectuals' power depended mostly on the emperor's vicinity at court and his concern with non-military matters. Consequently, from the 230s, when the emperors were forced increasingly to focus on military crises in border regions, this group of equestrians seems to have reduced its active, or at least its perceptible, involvement in imperial administration, even in cases of intellectuals who accompanied the emperor on his campaigns.

From the reign of Septimius Severus onward, equestrians were also increasingly appointed as provincial governors and military commanders. This second trend was of a different order, as in this case it was no longer imperial *liberti* whose previous posts equestrians now filled, but senators. This extension of equestrian power, however, was often disguised as a provisional appointment: many equestrians were appointed as *agens vice*, and thus supposedly replacing senators temporarily as deputies. A great number of these positions went to ranking soldiers who had eventually acquired equestrian status. Whereas this group only constituted a minority within the *ordo equester* in the first and most of the second centuries AD, in the course of the third century military profes-

sionals came to dominate within the equestrian order. The military crises under Marcus Aurelius, during which militarily skilled equestrians such as Pertinax were able to rise rapidly, can probably count as the situation where this trend first developed. From the 230s onward, emperors badly needed such professional military men. Their military experience was the main reason that they could participate in imperial power and thus their main power base. The power of those men who rose to the top of imperial administration depended furthermore on access to money and supplies and the support of a great number of soldiers. Considering the other aspects of power as defined by Dahl, military matters dominated the scope of their power, and those subject to their power consisted solely of the soldiers under their command. For *duces*, a geographic area (*dux limitis* or *dux ripae*) or specific army units (*dux exercitus*) often constituted the domain of their authority. How much power they could exercise varied and depended on a combination of factors, such as the number of troops they commanded, the presence and level of authority of other (military) power holders in the area, and the resources at their disposal.

The office of the *praefectus praetorio*, the high equestrian position on which we are best informed, experienced a similarly gradual extension of power over the course of the third century. The available evidence demonstrates an increasing focus first on legal and bureaucratic authority at the beginning of the period under scrutiny and later, from circa 240 onward, a focus on military authority. Thus, the development of the range of duties assigned to the highest ranking equestrian seems to reflect the main development within the *ordo*: the high status of the educated intellectuals, sophists and jurists, who dominated at court from the late second century until the 230s was gradually assumed by military professionals. It is noteworthy that a similar process occurred in the emperorship, as has been demonstrated in Chapter 1. That emperors who spent most of their time at court in Rome selected a different type of men as praetorian prefect than emperors who were mostly active in military campaigns at the peripheries is only logical, as emperors' shifting priorities demanded different qualities in their second man. Ideally, a praetorian prefect combined legal, civil-administrative and military skills, as all these matters fell within the scope of the prefect's power. Sometimes, the simultaneous appointment of two praetorian prefects with a different background could mobilize a combination of these skills. However, the appointment of two simultaneously operating praetorian prefects, which was a simple way to control the level of power either of them could exercise, seems to

have passed out of use over the course of the third century. This obviously allotted a (single) praetorian prefect more power. As to the domain of the praetorian prefect's power: he was second only to the emperor and thus the second most powerful man within the Empire. Eventually, the praetorian prefect's status was equalized to his high level of power: prefects received senatorial rank and titulature, and could even enter the senate as consuls, while retaining their office as prefect. From the 260s such a status upgrade was occasionally applied. Consequently, those praetorian prefects may have approached (but not equaled) the status of the senatorial elite, who by then seem to have dominated areas such as for instance Italy as *curatores* and *correctores*. Combined with the replacement of senators by equestrians in the military sphere, this elevation of status may have contributed to the praetorian prefect's increasing ability to operate autonomously, separate from the emperor. Whether the praetorian prefect continued to operate on the basis of *imperium* delegated by the emperor, or his *imperium* was eventually attached to the prefecture itself, is unresolved. Either way, this will have affected the power which the prefect could exercise, especially in confrontations with men of high status. Yet, as said above, for now this matter remains unresolved.

Since the status elevation of the praetorian prefect, the highest equestrian officer, rose in the third century, it would be reasonable to conjecture that the military professionals who came to dominate the *ordo equester* experienced a comparable upgrade in status in due course. In fact, there are some indications that a growing number of equestrian officers received the title *vir perfectissimus*. Whereas this title had been reserved for high-ranking equestrian prefects and imperial secretaries—equestrian men with a relatively high level of *paideia* and status—, up until the Severan era, from the 240s onward the title was also bestowed upon less high-ranking equestrian officers. It is notable that this elevation in status started long after equestrians had been assuming positions which were previously reserved for senators. The lack of clarity caused by the fact that such appointments were initially presented as interim solutions may have facilitated this lag time.

These examples of status elevation within the equestrian order may indicate that senatorial status became somewhat less prestigious in the course of the third century. Both the equestrian emperors and the fact that men like Timesitheus and Priscus, who played essential roles within imperial administration, seem not to have been elevated to senatorial rank support this proposition. The same applies to the inscription concerning Rufinus, in which his equestrian status is recorded well before his

consular rank. Yet, it should be noted that the increase of status within the equestrian order was not ubiquitous: individual equestrians saw their level of status rise, but not all members of the *ordo* experienced such elevation of status. Likewise, senatorial status was not subject to a certain depreciation everywhere in the Empire, as has been discussed in Chapter 2. Moreover, the fact that some high equestrian prefects were granted senatorial dignities may also indicate that senatorial status was still the highest status symbol available, at least in those areas where senators still played an active role in imperial administration.

To conclude, the changing position of equestrians who served at the very top of Roman imperial administration shows close connections with the changing composition of the order in the period under discussion. Categorical statements as they have been made by scholars in the past are therefore indemonstrable.

CHAPTER FOUR

HIGH-RANKING MILITARY OFFICERS: SEPTIMIUS SEVERUS VERSUS GALLIENUS

Discussed so far have been changes in power and status of the emperors, the senatorial elite and high equestrians. This chapter examines the military officers, among whom both senators and equestrians played a role. To illustrate the developments in the power and status of military officers during the third century, two cases will be analyzed and compared: the set of high-ranking military officers under Septimius Severus and those operating under Gallienus.

Admittedly, confining oneself to test cases can be tricky, since this could paint too fragmentary a picture. There are, however, several reasons why such an approach is justified. First of all, the overwhelming number of military events in the third century combined with the gradually declining quantity and quality of the evidence precludes mapping out the positions of *all* third-century military officers. A thorough study of these two cases, separated by about sixty years, will probably create a view of equal, or even better, standing. Second, these cases are both relatively well documented and they correspond in that both at the beginning of Severus' reign and during most of the rule of Gallienus, the Empire experienced crisis, a situation which displays common structures most clearly.¹ Apart from these parallels which allow for comparison, there are also distinctions which indicate changes and developments in the composition, power and status of the Empire's high-ranking military officers over the course of the third century. Yet the divergent nature and quality of the source material of the two cases, prevents two precisely parallel discussions. The evidence on Septimius Severus' generals offers us the opportunity to draw conclusions about the individuals in the offices. For Gallienus' military officers, however, the evidence is more fragmentary. Nevertheless, it suffices to determine a frame, in which the individual generals fit, and to deduce patterns and draw conclusions.

¹ Cf. Flaig (1997), 20: 'Aber der Ernstfall ist die Probe darauf, welche politischen Beziehungen wirken und welche nicht.'

An analysis and comparison of these cases will reveal not only a change in the character of the era, but also changes in the social rank of military officers and the declining value of senatorial rank in military contexts. Furthermore, it shows some strategic arrangements of the emperors to secure their power and to prevent the military from becoming a threat. Before we can proceed to an analysis, however, a chronological overview, which will discuss the high-ranking officers who emerge from the literary and epigraphic evidence, is indispensable.

4.1. *Septimius Severus and His Military Officers*

Severus' Initial Support—The Expeditio Urbica (193)

Table 4.1. Severus' supporters in 193

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>
Clodius Albinus	<i>Legatus Aug pr pr Britanniae</i>
Fabius Cilo	<i>Consul suffectus</i>
Iulius Avitus Alexianus	<i>Procurator ad annonam Ostiis</i>
Iulius Laetus	Commander of the <i>praecursores</i>
Iulius Septimius Castinus	<i>Tribunus militum legionis I Adiutricis</i> (Pannonia Sup.) <i>item V Macedonicae</i> (Moesia Inf.)
Marius Maximus	<i>Legatus legionis I Italicae</i> (Moesia Inf.)
Septimius Geta	<i>Legatus Aug pr pr Moesiae Inferioris</i>
Valerius Valerianus	<i>Praepositus vexillationis</i>

In 193, Septimius Severus, governor of Pannonia Superior, seized imperial power. Inevitably, the Pannonian legions supported his claim. Additional support came from other legions of the Rhine and Danubian area, for instance those stationed in Moesia Inferior, the province governed by Severus' brother Septimius Geta.² *Tribunus militum* Iulius Septimius Castinus and legionary legate Marius Maximus Perpetuus Aurelianus thus sided with Severus at early stages in their senatorial careers. Furthermore, by acclaiming Clodius Albinus, the governor of Britannia, *Caesar*, Severus secured the support of the three legions stationed there.³

² Septimius Geta is attested as governor of Moesia Inferior in *AE* 1946, 131 = *IRT* 541 (Lepcis Magna) and an inscription from Oescus, Moesia Inferior. See Boteva (1996a), 239–240, note 8. On Septimius Geta, see furthermore *PIR*² S 453. Severus' coinage (*BMCRE* V, 21, nos. 7–25) shows that at least fifteen of the sixteen legions in Raetia, Noricum, Dacia, the Pannonian, Moesian and German provinces, initially supported him. Cf. Campbell (2005a), 3, note 6. On the year 193 and Severus' initial support, see also Birley (1988), 89–107; Christol (1997), 26–28.

³ On Iulius Septimius Castinus, see *PIR*² I 566; on Marius Maximus Perpetuus Aure-

A man named Iulius Laetus led Severus' advance guard during his march on Rome. It is very likely that he is the same man who later played a role in the Parthian wars and Albinus' defeat.⁴ Another man involved was Valerius Valerianus, who as *praepositus* commanded one of the detachments during this *expeditio urbica*. Valerianus had previously completed the equestrian *tres militiae* and served as procurator in Cyprus and cavalry commander (*praepositus equitum*).⁵

Support within the city of Rome seems to have been arranged as well: if we may believe the *Historia Augusta*, which reports that Fabius Cilo was appointed *consul designatus* by Commodus before the latter was murdered, Cilo may well have been *consul suffectus* in April 193.⁶ At several moments in their careers, Severus and Cilo clearly operated in each other's vicinity.⁷ It is therefore reasonable to assume that they knew each other when Severus was proclaimed emperor. As consul (even if he was still a *designatus*), Cilo would be a powerful ally in the capital. Iulia Domna's brother-in-law, Iulius Avitus Alexianus, may also have performed useful service for Severus when he marched on Rome: if he was indeed *procurator ad annonam* in Ostia in 193, and so assisting the *praefectus annonae* of Rome in the provision, storage and transportation of the corn supply of the capital, as Birley suggests, he was an important man.⁸

lianus, see *CIL* 6.1450 = *ILS* 2935 (Roma); *PIR*² M 308; Birley (1997b), esp. 2694–2703; cf. Chapter 2; on Clodius Albinus, see *PIR*² C 1186; Birley (2005), 174–180.

⁴ *HA, Vita Did. Iul.* 8, 1. On Laetus as Severus' commander during the Parthian wars, see Dio 75, 2–3 (pp. 196–197); 75, 9, 1–2. On Laetus, cavalry commander in the battle against Albinus, see Dio 76, 6, 8; Herodianus 3, 7, 3–7; cf. *HA, Vita Sev.* 11, 2. On Iulius Laetus, see also *PIR*² I 373.

⁵ Valerius Valerianus, according to Birley (1988), 98, possibly of Pannonian origin, was an *eques* whose career is known to us from an inscription from Caesarea Maritima. Unfortunately, a third of the text was lost when a later inscription was engraved on the same column. Enough has survived, however, to show that Valerianus was a key figure during Septimius Severus' civil wars. By now, several scholars have suggested restorations, so that we have some idea of what his career may have looked like. See Speidel (1985), cf. Fitz (1969).

⁶ *HA, Vita Comm.* 20, 1. On Fabius Cilo, see *PIR*² F 27.

⁷ They both commanded a legion in Cappadocia at the beginning of the sole reign of Commodus. Fabius Cilo was *legatus legionis XVI Flaviae Firmae* which was stationed in Samosata between 180 and 184. Septimius Severus was *legatus legionis IV Scythicae* which was stationed in Zeugma ca. 182/183. Later, they governed the neighbouring provinces of Gallia Narbonensis and Gallia Lugdunensis at about the same time in the 180s.

⁸ Cf. Birley (2005), 226. On Iulius Avitus Alexianus, see *PIR*² I 192; Halfmann (1982); Birley (2005), 225–226.

The Battle against Niger—The Expeditio Asiana (193–194)

Table 4.2. Men involved in the battle against Niger

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>
Claudius Candidus	<i>Dux exercitus Illyrici</i> 193/194 <i>Dux adversus rebelles Asiae</i> 194
Cornelius Anullinus	<i>Legatus Aug/Dux exercitus</i>
Fabius Cilo	<i>Praepositus vexillationibus Illyricianis</i> 193 <i>Comes in expeditione Orientali</i> 194 <i>Legatus Aug pr pr Ponti et Bithyniae</i> 193/194
Hedius Rufus Loll. Gentianus	<i>Comes</i>
Marius Maximus	<i>Dux exercitus Moesiaci</i>
Valerius Valerianus	<i>Praepositus vexillationis adversus hostes publicos</i> (under Anullinus)

After Didius Iulianus was cut out, the senate officially acknowledged Severus as the new emperor. While Albinus secured the northwestern borders, Severus was free to move eastwards and deal with another rival. Pescennius Niger, governor of Syria, had been acclaimed emperor by the troops in Antiocheia at about the same time Severus was proclaimed.⁹ Although Niger had been playing a waiting game for awhile, he now headed for Rome. Severus' first response was to send Fabius Cilo to Perinthus as commander of a number of *vexillationes Illyriciani* to prevent Niger's troops from advancing any further into Thracia, probably before Severus reached Rome. Apparently, Cilo and his forces were not very successful: many soldiers were slain and Niger advertized a victory on his coins.¹⁰ After the defeat, that probably convinced Severus that Cilo was more valuable as an adviser than as a commander, the senator joined Severus as *comes* during the remainder of the expedition. Another *comes*, the patrician Hedius Rufus Lollianus Gentianus, like Cilo did not have much recent military experience.¹¹ Nevertheless, he served as *comes* thrice at the beginning of Severus' reign, in the expedition against Niger,

⁹ On the war against Niger, see Birley (1988), 108–120.

¹⁰ *HA, Vita Sev.* 8, 12–13; *BMCRE* V, 73–74.

¹¹ As *legatus legionis XXII Primigeniae*, Lollianus Gentianus was sent to Moguntiacum (modern Mainz) during the reign of Commodus, ca. 184. In those days, Germania Superior was afflicted by unrest caused by the revolt of Maternus, also known as the *Bellum Desertorum*. On this revolt, see *CIL* 11.6053, 13.11757; Herodianus 1, 10; *HA, Vita Comm.* 16, 2; *Pesc. Nig.* 3, 3–5. See also Alföldy (1989b); Hekster (2002), 65–67, with further references. When the German legion *VIII Augusta* was besieged in 185, the other legions in the area must have been affected by the unrest as well. On Hedius Rufus Lollianus Gentianus' career, see Christol (1981); and Chapter 2, Excursus.

and later in the first Parthian war and the campaign against Albinus. Birley suggests that Severus and Hediū Lollianus may have met when the former was governor of Lugdunensis and the latter was on his way to Moguntiacum (modern Mainz) to command the legion *XXII Primigenia*.¹² Although there is no evidence that they actually met then and there, it is very unlikely that Septimius Severus did not know Hediū Lollianus, or the latter's father, who was one of the more senior senators in those days. Severus must at least have been familiar with the *gens*, which belonged to the senatorial elite in the late second century, as has been discussed in Chapter 2.

Several other men played a more active role in the battle against Niger, one example being Claudius Candidus.¹³ A special army unit drawn from the Pannonian legions (the *exercitus Illyricus*) was put under the command of this former *eques*, who had acquired military experience under Marcus Aurelius and had been supply official in Marcus' second expedition against the Germans. Under Commodus, Candidus had reached the praetorian rank through *adlectio*.¹⁴ Fitz's suggestion that Claudius Candidus may have been *legatus* of one the Pannonian legions at the time of Severus' proclamation would help to explain why the emperor appointed Candidus as *dux exercitus Illyrici*.¹⁵ Candidus' appointment could then be seen as a parallel to Marius Maximus, who was promoted *dux exercitus Moesiaci* from a comparable position. Marius Maximus, the son of a procurator, started his senatorial *cursus honorum* under Marcus Aurelius and gained considerable military experience as legionary tribune in the Marcomannic war.¹⁶ After several civil-administrative positions

¹² Birley (1988), 76.

¹³ On Claudius Candidus, see *PIR*² C 823; Leunissen (1989), 381.

¹⁴ His *adlectio* was probably one of Commodus' countless appointments to the praetorian rank whereby he obscured the rank's significance, as the *Historia Augusta* puts it (*HA, Vita Pert.* 6, 10). Presumably, Marius Maximus was also one of the many men whom Commodus promoted to the praetorian rank by appointment instead of advancement for actual service. Replenishing the senate was probably necessary after the Antonine Plague. Cf. Duncan-Jones (1996); Bagnall (2000); Scheidel (2002); Bruun (2003).

¹⁵ Fitz (1966a), 831 ff. Unfortunately, no evidence exists to confirm this hypothesis. It is also possible that Candidus was in Asia Minor when Severus was proclaimed; he had been an assistant of the governor of Asia and subsequently *curator* of Nicomedia and Ephesus. In that case, someone else was commanding the army and turned over his command to Candidus at his arrival. See Leunissen (1989), 349, note 262, with further references.

¹⁶ Marius Maximus was *tribunus legionis* twice. Birley (1997b), 2698–2699, points out that the double tribunate was not very common. He suggests (2699, note 52), 'that his legate of XXII Primigenia when Maximus was in the legion was either Clemens or

under Commodus, he became *legatus legionis* in Moesia Inferior under Severus' brother Geta. In the war against Niger, an army corps drawn from the Moesian legions was thus placed under Marius Maximus' command.

Candidus defeated Niger's ally Asellius Aemilianus at Cyzicus, and shortly thereafter Niger himself at Nicaea. According to Dio, Candidus led masterfully when his soldiers were on the verge of taking flight.¹⁷ Severus obviously recognized Candidus' leadership qualities: he took regular part in Severus' expeditions in the next few years, as will become clear. After Niger's defeat, Marius Maximus was sent to capture Byzantium with his army, in which he succeeded.

Another general sent against Niger was Cornelius Anullinus.¹⁸ In 193, he had reached the high senatorial post of governor of Africa Proconsularis. Yet, he was commander-in-chief (*dux*) during the battle at Issus.¹⁹ Anullinus' ancestors are unknown, but given the rather large number of positions he held before his consulate, he almost certainly did not belong to a patrician family. Like Severus, he may have been the son of an *eques*. He and Severus may have met in Rome at the beginning of their careers, for Severus was to serve under Anullinus as *quaestor* during the latter's position as governor of Hispania Baetica in 170. Due to Moorish invasions, however, the province was taken out of the senate's control. According to Birley, Severus' appointment to Baetica probably resulted from a request by Anullinus.²⁰ Anullinus and Severus might also have had a long-lasting *amicitia* which went beyond the political sphere.²¹ This would explain why such a senior senator, member of the senatorial elite, agreed to take up this military post.

Valerius Valerianus was also deployed again: after his success during the march on Rome, he led a detachment, possibly the same one as

Cerealis, and that he moved to Raetia when his immediate commander was promoted to be governor there.' On Marius Maximus' father, L. Marius Perpetuus, see *PIR*² M 313; Plaum (1960–1961), vol. 1, 411–414, no. 168; On Marius Maximus' ancestors, see also Birley (1997b), 2695–2697.

¹⁷ Dio 75, 6, 5–6.

¹⁸ On Cornelius Anullinus, see *PIR*² C 1322; Thomasson (1996), 77–78, no. 100.

¹⁹ According to Dio 75, 7, 1–8, Anullinus was '*dux Severi imperatoris in Oriente*' (ἐπιστατοῦντος). Cf. Leunissen (1989), 347, note 244; Thomasson (1996), 78.

²⁰ Birley (1988), 40; 49.

²¹ Birley (1988), 112; 122. Birley even calls Anullinus 'Severus' senior marshal'. The idea of *amicitia* between Severus and Anullinus is strengthened by the fact that the emperor granted Anullinus a house in Rome, according to *Epitome de Caesaribus* 20, 6.

before, to Asia Minor to join the battle against Niger. Under Anullinus he commanded the cavalry at Issus.²²

When the provinces that Niger had won were recaptured, order had to be restored. Claudius Candidus was sent back into Asia with at least part of his army to pursue the remaining supporters of Niger, who were declared public enemies as *dux adversus rebelles*. Fabius Cilo was appointed governor of Bithynia et Pontus. He may have had to deal with some supporters of Niger as well, although no specific mention of them was made in the sources. To ensure that no future governor of Syria would take up the idea of proclaiming himself emperor, the province was split in two, Syria Coele and Syria Phoenice.²³

The First Parthian War—The Expeditio Mesopotamena (195)

Table 4.3. Men involved in the first Parthian war

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>
Claudius Candidus	<i>Dux exercitus Illyrici</i>
Cornelius Anullinus	<i>Legatus Aug/Dux exercitus</i>
Hedius Rufus Loll. Gentianus	<i>Comes</i>
Iulius Laetus	General (<i>dux?</i>)
Probus	Commander of a field army (<i>dux exercitus?</i>)
Sextius Magius Lateranus	<i>Dux exercitus</i>
Valerius Valerianus	<i>Praepositus summae expeditionis</i>

Immediately after Niger's defeat, Severus needed to strengthen his authority in the East. He started a punitive campaign against the Parthians, who had supported Niger. Since Severus could not afford to offend the Parthians directly, the so-called *expeditio Mesopotamena* aimed at the Osrhoeni of Mesopotamia and 'Arabs' and 'Adiabeniens', supposedly Parthian vassals.²⁴

In his account of the expedition against the Osrhoeni and the Adiabeni, Dio mentions three generals: Lateranus, Candidus, and Laetus.²⁵ Of these, Claudius Candidus commanded the Illyrian army again as *dux*.

²² Dio 75, 7, 1. According to Speidel (1985), 325, this detachment was Danubian.

²³ Birley (1988), 114–115, with further references.

²⁴ Dio 75, 1, 1 (pp. 194–195) The name *expeditio felicissima Mesopotamena* for Severus' first Parthian war appears in Valerius Valerianus' career inscription (AE 1991, 1579 = AE 2001, 01968, Palaestina) and ILS 9098 (Numidia). Cf. ILS 1144 (Roma). See Speidel (1985), 324. On the expedition, see also Birley (1988), 115, with further references.

²⁵ Dio 75, 2, 3 (pp. 196–197).

As noted above, Laetus was probably the same man who had led the advance guard on its march into Rome in 193. The third general, Sextius Magius Lateranus, belongs to the group of patrician consulars. His father had been *consul ordinarius* as colleague of Lucius Verus in 154, and his grandfather Sextius Cornelius Africanus had been *consul ordinarius* in 112 with the emperor Traianus.²⁶ The Septimii were acquainted with the Sextii: Septimius Severus' relative Gaius Septimius Severus (*consul suffectus* in 160) had participated in a *consilium* of Marcus and Commodus in 177 along with Sextius Magius Lateranus' father.²⁷

In the battle against the 'Arabs,' Severus again divided the imperial field army into three units. According to Dio, the divisions were commanded by Laetus, Cornelius Anullinus and one Probus, who is otherwise unknown.²⁸ Furthermore, Valerius Valerianus was involved in this battle. Perhaps he was linked to Anullinus again, as he had been in the battle at Issus. Valerianus' career inscription calls him *praepositus summae [felicissimae expeditionis] Mesopotamena*. It seems that, after Septimius Severus had initially commanded the expedition, Valerianus was entrusted with finishing off the Mesopotamian campaign against the Arabs. In the meantime, the emperor himself went to Gallia with his armies to fight Clodius Albinus. If this is correct, Valerianus held the strategically most important position in Mesopotamia at that point. As Speidel argues, 'his command over the last phase of the Mesopotamian campaigns proves that Valerianus was one of Severus' most trusted field commanders in AD 195.'²⁹ In 197, however, as an attack of the Parthians asked for more drastic interference, the higher-ranked general Laetus was called back to Mesopotamia.

²⁶ Sextius Magius Lateranus' full name was T. Sextius Lateranus M. Vibius Ovel[lius? ...] Secundus L. Vol[usius Torquatus?] Vestinus. On him, see *PIR*² S 666. T. Sextius Magius Lateranus (*consul ordinarius* 94), and T. Sextius Africanus, (*consul suffectus* 59), may have been his ancestors. His ancestry has even be traced back to the Republican Sextii from Ostia. See stemma 16 in *PIR*², pars VII, fasc. II, 257.

²⁷ *AE* 1971, 534 (Banasa, Mauretania Tingitana). Sextius Magius Lateranus' father, Sextius Lateranus, was mentioned third on the list of *consilarii*, C. Septimius Severus is the fourth one who is mentioned. For further discussion of this inscription, see Sherwin-White (1973).

²⁸ Dio 75, 3, 2 (pp. 198–199).

²⁹ Speidel (1985), 326.

The Struggle against Albinus—The Expeditio Gallica (195–197)

Meanwhile, hostilities between Severus and his former ally Clodius Albinus had increased. By giving his elder son Caracalla the title *Caesar*, Severus deprived Albinus of any hope of succeeding to the Principate. In reaction, Albinus may have contacted senators on the possibility of a revolt.³⁰ Although the course of events has been unclear, the result was a decisive break between Severus and Albinus. By the end of 195, after Severus' declared him a public enemy, Albinus responded by proclaiming himself emperor and invading Gallia.³¹

Table 4.4. Men involved in the battle against Albinus

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>
Claudius Candidus	<i>Dux adversus rebelles Noricae</i> 196 <i>Dux exercitus Illyrici</i> 196 / 197
Claudius Claudianus	<i>Legatus legionis XIII Geminae et V Macedonicae</i> (Dacia) 194?/195–196? <i>Praepositus vexillationum Daciscarum</i> 196?–197
Fabius Cilo	<i>Legatus Aug pr pr Moesiae Superioris</i> 195 <i>Dux vexillationum per Italiam exercitus</i> 196 <i>Legatus Augg pr pr Pann. Sup.</i> 197–201 / 202?
Hedius Rufus Loll. Gentianus	<i>Comes</i>
Iulius Avitus Alexianus	<i>Legatus legionis III[I] Flaviae</i> (Moesia Sup.)
Iulius Laetus	<i>Legatus Augg pr pr Raetiae</i> Cavalry commander (<i>dux/strategos</i>)
Iunius Faust. Pl. Postumianus	<i>Legatus legionis I Adiutricis</i> in Pannonia Sup.
Marius Maximus	<i>Dux exercitus Moesiaci</i>
Septimius Geta	<i>Legatus Aug pr pr Daciae</i>
Virius Lupus	<i>Legatus Aug pr pr Germaniae Inferioris</i> (<i>dux</i> ?)

Virius Lupus, governor of Germania Inferior, was mobilized by Septimius Severus to solve the problem. He acted as general in a battle against Albinus, but was defeated and many of his soldiers were slain.³² After

³⁰ Cf. *HA, Vita Sev.* 10, 2.

³¹ On the war against Albinus, see Birley (1988), 121–128.

³² Dio 76, 6, 2. Cf. *HA, Vita Sev.* 10, 7. Some scholars assume that he was a general with a special commission, but Leunissen (1989), 242f., argues that Dio would not have used the word *strategos* in that case. Leunissen finds it more likely that the governor Virius Lupus commanded the provincial legions. On Virius Lupus, see Chapter 2, Excursus.

initial success of Albinus' armies, the tide began to turn early in 197. Eventually Albinus and his army were defeated near Lugdunum.³³

Several names of officers involved in the conflict with Albinus have come down to us. Again, Claudius Candidus was deployed with his *exercitus Illyricus*. When he was on his way to the West with his army in 196, he again had to pursue some rebels, this time probably followers of Albinus, in Noricum. In 197, Candidus, who had by then reached consular rank, participated in the battle at Lugdunum. Marius Maximus was also involved: he led his Moesian army from captured Byzantium to Lugdunum and joined the fight.

A new name pops up among the officers: Claudius Claudianus. This man may have been identical with the Claudius Claudianus who, as equestrian *praefectus cohortis I Bracaraugustanorum*, dedicated an altar to Diana Nemorensis in Dalmatia.³⁴ In 195, Claudius Claudianus took up a legionary command over two legions stationed in Dacia. Septimius Geta, Severus' brother, was governing Dacia at that time. In 196, a special force was formed from within the Dacian army to participate in the battle against Albinus. Claudianus was to command these *vexillationes*, perhaps accompanied by Geta.³⁵

The leading role, however, in the final battle against Albinus at Lugdunum went to Laetus as cavalry commander. According to Dio's account, Severus and the praetorians came to the aid of the Severan troops when they saw them in danger. As the situation worsened and Albinus' troops forced the Severans into retreat, the emperor fell off his horse. At that point, with the emperor's life imperiled, the Severan cavalry under command of Laetus appeared and saved the day. So Laetus won the victory against Albinus for Severus. Dio suggests that Laetus waited before he intervened, allegedly hoping that both Severus and Albinus would get killed so that he himself could be proclaimed emperor. Moreover, Dio claims that Laetus only reacted when he saw that Severus' side was prevailing. The same suggestion can be found in the work of Herodianus.³⁶ The story on Laetus' betrayal may have been made up after his death.

Some others played a minor role in Albinus' defeat. First, Hedijs Rufus Lollianus Gentianus again advised Severus as *comes*. Fabius Cilo had

³³ Battle at Tinurtium: *HA, Vita Sev.* 11, 1. Battle at Lugdunum: Dio, 76, 6.

³⁴ *ILS* 3245 (Narona, Dalmatia). On Claudius Claudianus, see *PIR*² C 834; Leunissen (1989), 382.

³⁵ On Geta as governor of Dacia, see Leunissen (1989), 237, with further references.

³⁶ Dio 76, 6, 8; Herodianus 3, 7, 3–7.

been transferred to Moesia Superior in 195, no doubt because Severus wanted to put the northern provinces into trusted hands in anticipation of his conflict with Albinus.³⁷ Second, in the second half of 196, Cilo commanded detachments of the Italic army which escorted Severus back to Rome on his way from Mesopotamia. Since Fabius Cilo became governor of Pannonia Superior in 197, it is reasonable to assume that he escorted the emperor only as far as this province.³⁸ Third, Avitus Alexianus probably served under Fabius Cilo as *legatus legionis IV Flaviae*, and later was sent to govern Raetia. Whether Avitus Alexianus played a more active role in the defeat of Albinus is unclear.³⁹

New men might have ascended, such as Iunius Faustinus Placidus Postumianus.⁴⁰ Most scholars assign this senator's career to the joint reign of Severus and Caracalla, after he had probably started his senatorial *cursus* under Commodus as the emperor's *candidatus* as *tribunus plebis* and *praetor*, which indicates patrician status.⁴¹ It was presumably Severus who appointed him *iuridicus* in northern Italy. Postumianus' next position was his first military one: he became *legatus* of *I Adiutrix*, one of the legions which had supported Severus. By 196/197, the legion must have been back at its main base in Brigetio in Pannonia Superior. It is not unlikely that Severus marched against Albinus in Lugdunum via Pannonia, gathering additional forces in the Danubian area. Perhaps *legio*

³⁷ Cilo may have been present when Caracalla was elevated to the rank of *Caesar*, probably near Viminacium, capital of Moesia Superior, in (April?) 196. The same applies to Iulius Avitus Alexianus, legionary legate in Moesia Superior in those days. Cf. Birley (1988), 122.

³⁸ Birley (1988), 124. According to Birley, Caracalla was left behind with Fabius Cilo in Pannonia Superior.

³⁹ Leunissen (1989), 280. In Alexianus' *cursus* inscription *AE* 1921, 64 = *AE* 1963, 42 (Dalmatia), he is called *legatus pro praetore provinciae [Raetiae]*. In an earlier dedication to the god Elagabalus from when he was governor of Raetia (*AE* 1962, 229, Raetia), he is called *praeses*. Whether the term indicates military activity is uncertain.

⁴⁰ The main part of Iunius Faustinus Placidus Postumianus' career can be deduced from his *cursus* inscription *CIL* 8.597 (Africa Proconsularis). A funerary inscription set up by his son and daughter (*CIL* 8.11763, Africa Proconsularis), lists the final part of his career. See Birley (2005), 192–193. It is very likely that the two inscriptions are related to one and the same person. However, it is also possible that the latter inscription refers to a descendant of the Postumianus in the former inscription. On Postumianus' see also *PIR*² I 751, cf. 752.

⁴¹ Except for Fitz (1966b), 25 ff., who suggests a date under Marcus Aurelius. Against his dating, see Alföldy (1969), 50 ff.; cf. Birley (2005), 193–194, who warns that the reconstruction of Postumianus' career under Septimius Severus and Caracalla rests on fragile foundations, as the two *Augusti* in the formula *adlecto inter comites Augg nn* may even be Valerianus and Gallienus and the governorships could have been held under those emperors and their predecessors in the 240s and 250s.

I Adiutrix even participated in the battle against Albinus. This would explain the further course of Postumianus' career.

The Second Parthian War (197–198)

Soon after Albinus' death, Severus focused on the East again. He decided to deal with the Parthians once more after they had taken Mesopotamia, levying three new legions for the occasion. The northern half of Mesopotamia was restored to Rome. Yet, two attempts to seize the strategically important city of Hatra failed.⁴²

The only officer involved in this second Parthian war known to us was Laetus. In the autumn of 197, he was sent to relieve the city of Nisibis which the Parthians were about to seize.⁴³ Laetus succeeded and acquired still greater renown. His popularity with the soldiers became manifest at Hatra in 198, when the soldiers declared that they would not go on a campaign unless Laetus led them. As this threatened his own position, Severus decided that enough was enough, and Laetus was put to death, though Severus obviously denied that Laetus was killed on his orders.⁴⁴ This renders suspicious the story of Laetus' betrayal in Lugdunum, as a possible example of *ex morte* vilification. If there really had been any reason for Severus to believe that Laetus betrayed him at Lugdunum, Severus would have been taking a great risk by sending Laetus to relieve Nisibis by himself. Although Laetus probably remained close to the emperor during the second Parthian war, there is no mention of him holding any field commands after he rescued Nisibis, which may suggest that the emperor only then started to distrust Laetus.

Peace in the Empire (198–208)

When the civil and Parthian wars were over, there was peace in the Empire for about ten years. What happened with Severus' military officers during this period?

Sextius Magius Lateranus was only in action during the first Parthian war. Afterward, he was rewarded with an ordinary consulate in 197. Eck has suggested that Lateranus may have been *proconsul Asiae*, but offers no

⁴² Dio 76, 9–10. On the second Parthian war, see Birley (1988), 129–145.

⁴³ On Laetus' actions in the first Parthian war, see Dio 75, 2–3 (pp. 196–197); Birley (1988), 116–117.; on the second Parthian war, see Dio 76, 9, 1–2; Birley (1988), 127–129.

⁴⁴ Dio 76, 10, 1–3.

date.⁴⁵ Cornelius Anullinus' role as a military officer was also over after 195. He was appointed city prefect of Rome in 196 and held a second consulate in 199. Hediuf Rufus Lollianuf Gentianuf became *censitor* in 197/198 in Gallia Lugdunensis and perhaps also in Hispania Citerior in the next year. After Albinus' defeat, many nobles in those areas who had sided with him were put to death, 'a *census* would be badly needed there at that point.'⁴⁶ In 201, Hediuf Lollianuf concluded his senatorial career as *proconsul Asiae*. Fabius Cilo stayed in Pannonia Superior for some more years, governing this strategically crucial province when Severus was fighting Albinus and the Parthians, before he succeeded Anullinus as city prefect in Rome. He held this position until the end of Severus' reign and combined it with a second consulate in 204. Cilo, Lateranus and Anullinus were apparently imperial *amici* who were enriched and endowed with houses in the capital by the emperor, according to Aurelius Victor.⁴⁷

As for Severus' relatives, Geta held a second consulship in 203 with Plautianus as his colleague, and probably died not long afterwards.⁴⁸ Avitus Alexianus remained in his position as governor of Raetia until circa 199/200 and held a suffect consulship, perhaps *in absentia*, circa 200. Thereafter, he seems to have been out of office for almost eight years.⁴⁹

Immediately after Albinus' defeat, Marius Maximus was made governor of Gallia Belgica. The decision to put a strong military leader in this province is understandable considering the trouble in the north-west in the years before, especially in Britannia, which had been deprived of Roman legions for some time. During or shortly after his position in Belgica, Marius Maximus held a suffect consulship. As *vir consularis*, he was first sent to govern Germania Inferior and then to Syria Coele. After his post in Syria, his career seems to have experienced a currently inexplicable hiatus, though Birley notes that something similar seemed to have

⁴⁵ Based on *SEG* 36, 1094. For Eck's suggestion, see *PIR*² S 669. The fact that Lateranus' father was proconsul of Africa (168/169) corroborates this assumption, as the family thus belonged to the senatorial elite.

⁴⁶ Birley (1988), 126.

⁴⁷ Fabius Cilo was attested as *amicus Augustorum*, see *Epitome de Caesaribus* 20, 6. According to Birley (1988), 156, the 'domus Cilonis' was a palatial mansion and became a city landmark. Cf. Alföldy (1968), 134; 141–142; 159.

⁴⁸ On Geta's death, see Dio 77, 2, 4.

⁴⁹ Birley (2005), 226, ascribes this long period in which Avitus Alexianus was out of office to the influence of Plautianus, who was hostile to Iulia Domna and her family. He adds that Varius Marcellus, Alexianus' son-in-law, experienced similar treatment.

occurred in the career of his brother Marius Perpetuus.⁵⁰ Claudius Claudianus' case resembled that of Marius Maximus: after Albinus' defeat, he governed Pannonia Inferior, during which tenure he held a suffect consulate, and then governed Pannonia Superior until circa 206.

Claudius Candidus, who had probably held a consulate before or during the *expeditio Gallica*, was sent to govern Hispania Tarraconensis in 197–198. He was entrusted with the special task of hunting for rebels, i.e. remaining supporters of Albinus. Nothing is heard of him afterwards. Since his name was erased from his statue base at Tarraco, we may assume that he fell into disfavor with the emperor and was perhaps executed.⁵¹ This may have happened shortly after the incident with Laetus.

Valerius Valerianus never served in a military office under Severus again, and his career may not have continued under Severus at all. Perhaps his appointment as *procurator* of an unknown province fell under Severus, but his posts as *procurator* of Syria Palaestina and *praefectus Mesopotamiae et Osrhoenae* probably fell under Caracalla.⁵² Eventually, therefore, Valerianus reached one of the top positions of the equestrian career, but only after Severus died.⁵³

Iunius Faustinus Placidus Postumianus was made governor of Hispania Lusitania circa 197. The province had supported Albinus and probably experienced prosecutions of Albinus' supporters during Postumianus' term.⁵⁴ The governorship thus was more important in those years than it usually was. Next, Postumianus succeeded Marius Maximus as governor of Belgica and probably became *consul suffectus* after this

⁵⁰ According to Birley (1997b), 2699, the high favor that they both enjoyed under Caracalla may be a sign of a lack of favor under Severus caused by Plautianus' dominant position. Previously, Birley (1988), 176, had excluded the possibility that Marius Maximus fell out of favor with Severus, as the former was in high favor in the next reigns.

⁵¹ Candidus' name was erased from *CIL* 2.4114 = *ILS* 1140 (Hispania Citerior). He might have been one of the friends of Severus who were tried on the ground that they were plotting to kill the emperor, as *HA, Vita Sev.* 15, 4–6 mentions. The author of the *Historia Augusta* claims that Plautianus was behind this.

⁵² Duncan-Jones (1969) argued that the position of *praefectus Mesopotamiae et Osrhoenae* only existed from 212/213, when Caracalla deposed Abgar IX as king of Edessa, until the revival of the kingdom Edessa under Gordianus III. Valerianus' position as *procurator Syriae Palaestinae* may also have been held under Elagabalus.

⁵³ Although Duncan-Jones (1969) does not link the L. Valerius Valerianus who is mentioned on the epitaph from Pozzuoli to the equestrian commander during Severus' civil wars, it is very likely that they were identical. The new provinces of Mesopotamia and Osrhoene were equipped with two newly raised legions (*I and III Parthica*). See Dio 55, 24, 4, and Duncan-Jones (1969), 231.

⁵⁴ Leunissen (1989), 51, note 116.

governorship, circa 204/5. He was then sent to govern Moesia Inferior for some time between 205 and 208. Birley claims that his tenure may have been very brief, since Postumianus' name does not appear on the local coinage.⁵⁵

Julius Septimius Castinus precipitated the only actual military activity in this period. He may have been a kinsman of Severus, bearing the same *gentilicium*.⁵⁶ Castinus' career started at the end of Commodus' reign, and he was likely *tribunus militum* of *I Adiutrix* under Septimius Severus in Pannonia. Perhaps he served under Geta next as *tribunus* of *V Macedonica*. Both legions had supported Severus in 193. After several civil positions, Castinus became legionary legate of *I Minervia*, which was by then stationed at Lugdunum. Between 205 and 208, he was made *dux* of several *vexillationes* formed from *legio I Minervia* and three other legions stationed in the Rhine area. These *vexillationes* were mobilized 'against the disloyal and rebellious ones', but it is not clear who these rebels were.⁵⁷

Finally, Virius Lupus. Immediately after the defeat of Albinus and the British army at Lugdunum, Lupus was sent to govern Britannia, a sequence which was not unusual.⁵⁸ The position of the Romans in the north of the province of Britannia was weak when Lupus arrived. In the absence of most of the Roman garrison in 196–197, northern Britannia had been plundered by the Maeatae, who were probably joined by some other tribes. This had led to serious destruction and many Roman captives. Lupus had to buy off the Maeatae, who were at the point of bringing in the Caledonii.⁵⁹ Britannia had been a troublesome province ever since the death of a governor in a barbarian invasion circa 182/183 and the campaigns of Ulpian Marcellus, followed by discontent and mutiny in the British legions. Lupus is not heard of again. He was probably replaced

⁵⁵ Birley (2005), 194, note 40.

⁵⁶ Jacques (1982), 85, note 2, warns that 'Septimius' is a *nomen gentile* that occurs often. On his origin: Kajanto (1965), 251–252, mentions that 'Castinus' is very rare, but 'Castus' is popular in Africa, and 'Julius Castus' occurs there sixteen times. See also Birley (1988), 215 no. 19, and Leunissen (1989), 363.

⁵⁷ According to Alföldy (1967), 51, Castinus was *dux* circa 206–208, before his post as legionary commander in 208. As *dux* he had to defeat the remaining supporters of Clodius Albinus. Eck (1972/1973), 248–249, and id. (1985), 249, no. 77, agrees with Alföldy. Corbier (1973), 654, and Piso (1982), 381, note 51, think Castinus was *legatus legionis* before he was appointed *dux*. Cf. *PIR*² I 566; Leunissen (1989), 337, note 177. For my purposes, the exact order of the positions is irrelevant.

⁵⁸ Leunissen (1989), 242.

⁵⁹ Dio 75, 5, 4 (pp. 216–217).

after about three years, in 200. Perhaps Severus consulted him as former governor and specialist of Britannia before he went on his expedition.

The Expeditio Britannica (208–211)

Table 4.5. Men involved in the expeditio Britannica

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>
Alfenus Senecio	<i>Legatus Augg pr pr Britanniae 205/207?</i>
Iulius Avitus Alexianus	<i>Comes Augg</i>
Iunius Faust. Pl. Postumianus	<i>Comes Augg</i>
Oclatinus Adventus	<i>Procurator Augg in Britannia 205–207?</i>

In 208, Severus decided to go to Britannia to settle the conflict there. Preparations for the military expedition may have been started by Alfenus Senecio, when he was governor of the province between 205 and 207.⁶⁰ Severus may have met him when Senecio was governor of Syria Coele circa 200, at the time the emperor and his family were travelling in the East.⁶¹ Senecio may still have been in Britannia in the spring of 208, when Septimius Severus arrived with both his sons.⁶² Unfortunately, we lack any more details of the beginning Senecio's career. However, it is not unlikely that Senecio was a trusted servant of the emperor who had perhaps served the emperor well during the Parthian wars. In this respect, he may be compared to his predecessors in Britannia, Virius Lupus and Valerius Pudens, who had been governor of Pannonia Inferior in 193. They had both supported Severus in the civil wars.

It is also possible that Oclatinus Adventus, who served as (financial) *procurator* under Senecio and whose name appears on some inscriptions beside Senecio's, was sent to the island to make preparations for the impe-

⁶⁰ See Birley (2005), 191. Valerius Pudens is still attested in Britannia in 205. Senecio was probably his successor, so he probably was in Britannia from 205, or soon after. On Alfenus Senecio, see *PIR*² A 520; Birley (2005), 188–192.

⁶¹ An equestrian procurator named Alfenus Senecio, see was honored with an inscription (and presumably a statue) by the council at Cuicul (*CIL* 8.9046). The inscription mentions that he was *procurator Augusti Belgicae*. Other inscriptions (*ILS* 8391, Misenum; *CIL* 14.4509, Ostia) demonstrate that he was also *procurator Mauretaniae Caesariensis*, *subpraefectus* of the Misenum fleet and *subpraefectus vigilum*. It is generally assumed that this man was the father of the governor of Britannia and that he held these appointments in the reigns of Marcus Aurelius and Commodus. See Birley (2005), 190–191; cf. *PIR*² A 520.

⁶² Birley (2005), 161.

rial expedition, circa 205–207.⁶³ In that case, Adventus' arrival may have sidelined Senecio.⁶⁴ Adventus seems to have overseen the pay and provisioning of the army. However, Rankov suggests that, given Adventus' previous career in military intelligence, Severus may have sent him with the special task of recruiting and training scouts, and of gaining information about local conditions and the strength of the tribes north of Hadrian's Wall.⁶⁵

Iunius Faustinus Placidus Postumianus and Iulius Avitus Alexianus joined Severus as *comites* during the expedition.⁶⁶ Postumianus may have fulfilled his position as *praeses Britanniae* during the imperial expedition, as successor of Alfenus Senecio, but his tenure may also have taken place under Caracalla.⁶⁷

The Aftermath

The fates of Severus' military officers after the emperor's death varied. As has been mentioned above, several of them had already disappeared under Severus. Of these, some vanished mysteriously in what seems to have been the midst of their careers, such as Claudius Candidus and Claudius Claudianus. Others had reached the top of the senatorial *cursus honorum* and may just have retired, such as Anullinus, Lateranus and Hediuss Lollianus. Fabius Cilo was still city prefect under Caracalla, yet shortly after Geta's murder he was attacked and humiliated by some soldiers. Dio reports that it was Caracalla who had commanded the soldiers to kill the city prefect, but Caracalla stopped them when the

⁶³ *ILS* 2618 = *RIB* 1234 + *add.*; *RIB* 1462 (Britannia). Birley (2005), 192, suggests 'that Adventus, whose background was rather unusual for a financial procurator [...] had been specially ordered by Severus to inspect the state of the northern frontier because the emperor was contemplating a personal intervention in Britain.' On Adventus, see *PIR*² O 9; Rankov (1987); Birley (2005), 312–313, with further references.

⁶⁴ Herodianus 3, 14, 1, claims that the governor had sent a letter to the emperor in which he asked him for help. This may, however, have been a rhetorical *topos*, since Dio (77, 10, 6 'wars being won in Britain') suggests that the governor had been dealing with the situation quite well. On this, see Birley (1988), 172, and Birley (2005), 192. It is also relevant that Adventus' career seems to have stopped for a while. We have no information on positions which he occupied under Septimius Severus *after* his procuratorship, though his career continued under Caracalla.

⁶⁵ Rankov (1987), 247–249.

⁶⁶ On the *comites* in Britannia, see Alföldy (1969), 49 ff., and Birley (2005), 225–226.

⁶⁷ Neither *Inferior* nor *Superior* appears in the inscription *CIL* 8.11763 (Africa Proconsularis). This may indicate that he was governor of an undivided Britain, though this cannot be stated with certainty. Cf. Birley (2005), 194.

populace as well as the city troops began to protest.⁶⁸ Soon afterwards, Cilo was replaced as city prefect, and nothing is heard of him anymore. Perhaps he indeed fell out of favor with Caracalla. Whatever the reason, it is not unlikely that he retired, after having reached the pinnacle of the senatorial career.

Marius Maximus continued his career under Caracalla. He became proconsul of Africa and even served as proconsul of Asia for a double term, at a time when the emperor was present in the province.⁶⁹ An extended tenure such as his and the fact that he governed both proconsular provinces, were unprecedented. Caracalla obviously held Marius Maximus in high regard, but even after Caracalla's death he was *praefectus urbi* under Macrinus and *consul iterum* as Severus Alexander's colleague in 223.⁷⁰ This first generation senator, who began his career as military officer under Septimius Severus, eventually joined the senatorial nucleus described in Chapter 2. After Severus' death, however, he never again served in offices involving much military power.

The same applies to Valerius Valerianus and Iunius Faustinus Placidus Postumianus. Valerius Valerianus' career probably continued under Caracalla. Although his experience in the military sphere may have proven useful during his procuratorships, Valerianus no longer received special commissions in military crises. As prefect of Mesopotamia he reached an equestrian top position, but he never attained senatorial rank. Postumianus, after his post as *praeses Britanniae*, was made *praeses Hispaniae*, probably in Hispania Citerior.⁷¹

Only three of the men involved in military events under Severus continued in offices which entailed some military responsibility. Iulius Avitus Alexianus became *praefectus alimentorum* twice and was imperial *comes* again, probably in 213 during Caracalla's German wars. The reason for his

⁶⁸ Dio 78, 4–5, refers to Cilo as Caracalla's benefactor and tutor.

⁶⁹ IGRR 4.1287. Caracalla visited Thyatira during Marius Maximus' proconsulate.

⁷⁰ According to Leunissen (1989), 310, Marius Maximus was probably replaced as city prefect before 219, since not Marius Maximus, but Q. Tineius Sacerdos was *consul (II) ordinarius* with the emperor as his colleague in 219.

⁷¹ Problematic in Postumianus' case is that the dating of his career cannot be determined with certainty. Birley admits that a dating in the 240s and 250s is just as well possible. In that case, the significance of the positions as *legatus* of legion *I Adiutrix* and as governor in Lusitania and Belgica would be almost entirely lost. Another problem is that we cannot be sure whether the *praeses Hispaniae et Britanniae* is identical with the man of the *cursus* inscription of CIL 8.597 (Africa Proconsularis). Postumianus is not mentioned in the historiographical sources.

repeated appointment as *praefectus alimentorum* is unclear.⁷² Perhaps it was just convenient to appoint an experienced man at this position. After all, Alexianus had probably also been assisting a *praefectus alimentorum* at the beginning of his career as *procurator* in Ostia. Then, Alexianus governed Dalmatia. His term of office was probably not longer than a year and a half. At the end of Caracalla's reign, Alexianus presumably became proconsul of Asia and in 216/217 he seems to have accompanied Caracalla as *comes* in Mesopotamia.⁷³ According to Dio, Alexianus was sent to Cyprus by Caracalla as *assessor* (σύνεδρος), probably member of an equestrian governor's *consilium*. In view of Cyprus' location, it logically was relevant in the war's provisioning and Alexianus, with his experience in logistics and food supply, may have advised the governor on this matter.⁷⁴ On Cyprus, Alexianus died from old age and sickness, probably already in 217, but certainly before Elagabalus ascended the throne in June 218.⁷⁵ Although he was never mobilized by Caracalla at actual military commands, he was involved in positions concerning military logistics.

Iulius Septimius Castinus, after he governed Pannonia Inferior until 212, was sent to govern Dacia circa 215.⁷⁶ Under Macrinus, Castinus was exiled and he spent the rest of his life in Bithynia. Eventually, he was murdered by Elagabalus, allegedly 'because he was energetic (δραστήριός) and was known to many soldiers in consequence of the commands he had held and of his intimate association with Antoninus', as Dio puts it.⁷⁷ The literary sources refer to an association between Castinus and Caracalla—Dio even mentions friendship⁷⁸—but they never state kinship. Either way, Castinus must have owed the responsible military tasks

⁷² It had happened before, under Marcus Aurelius or Commodus, that the same man, Pollienus Auspex, was appointed at this position even thrice. See Halfmann (1982), 222, note 19.

⁷³ On the date of his proconsulship, see Leunissen (1989), 225. According to Pflaum (1979), 313, Avitus Alexianus joined Caracalla in Mesopotamia during his war against the Parthians. However, Barnes (1986), 204, doubts this. Cf. Leunissen (1989), 225, note 67.

⁷⁴ Alexianus was sent to Cyprus with a special task. Usually, Cyprus was governed by a praetorian *proconsul*. However, the island was governed by unusual officers in those years. The governor at the time of Alexianus' appoint was probably the equestrian *procurator* T. Caesernius Statianus [Quinc]tianus. Halfmann (1982), 223, note 22.

⁷⁵ Dio 79, 30, 4.

⁷⁶ Dio 79, 13, 3–4.

⁷⁷ Dio 80, 4, 3.

⁷⁸ Dio 79, 13, 2. *PIR*² I 566, calls Castinus *comes* of Caracalla, but this probably is a mistake. There is no indication that Castinus joined the emperor on a journey. On the contrary, Castinus was governing Dacia when Caracalla was in Bithynia (Nicomedia),

he received after a series of civil offices to some sort of special connection with the imperial household.

Finally, Oclatinus Adventus, who became *praefectus praetorio* under Caracalla. Like his colleague Macrinus, Adventus joined Caracalla during the Parthian expedition in Mesopotamia. As a man of military experience, Adventus may have actually commanded the praetorians during this campaign.⁷⁹ By the end of May 216, Caracalla honored him with the *ornamenta consularia*.⁸⁰ Macrinus elevated Adventus to senatorial rank through an *adlectio inter consulares* in April 217, appointed him *praefectus urbi* in the same year and made him fellow-consul in 218.⁸¹ Adventus was soon replaced by Marius Maximus as city prefect, but he continued as consul even after Macrinus was overthrown by Elagabalus.⁸² After this, nothing is heard of Adventus. Given his old age, it is not unlikely that he died soon afterwards.

Concluding Observations

Examining the men commissioned as high-ranking military officers by Severus leads to the following observations considering power and status: in the very late second and early third centuries, senators could obviously still exercise a high level of power in the military sphere. Severus himself was representative of senatorial *viri consulares*, who governed

Syria (Antiocheia) and Egypt (Alexandria). If Castinus was indeed *comes* of Caracalla, this may be an indication that it had become an honorary title.

⁷⁹ Pflaum (1960–1961), vol. 2, 666, no. 247.

⁸⁰ *HA, Vita Macr.* 4, 7, records that Macrinus' fellow-prefect was sent away (*collega ablegato*) when Caracalla was murdered. The name Adventus is not specifically mentioned, and it is not clear whether the phrase has a negative connotation. Magie (1960–1961, Loeb), vol. 2, 57, translates 'after his colleague was banished', but Adventus might have been sent away on a mission by the emperor. There is no indication that Adventus had fallen out of favor with Caracalla, who had granted him consular honors the year before. On the contrary, the words might have been added to absolve Adventus from any involvement in Caracalla's murder.

⁸¹ Dio 79, 14, who mentions that Macrinus was criticized by many because of Adventus' elevation, since 'he could neither see by reason of old age nor read for lack of education nor accomplish anything for want of experience', but especially since 'he had obtained the rule over the city prior to performing the duties of the consulship.' Dio even claims that Macrinus' purpose in elevating Adventus was 'throwing his own record into the background, since he himself had seized the imperial office while still a knight'. It is not difficult to explain Dio's contempt, since he as a senator would certainly be offended to see the new equestrian emperor ignore the principles of senatorial promotion.

⁸² Dio 80, 8, 2.

imperial provinces and in that capacity held supreme commands over provincial legions. Especially governors of provinces with two or three legions could become an immediate threat to imperial authority: those senators had the means (money and troops) to seize imperial power, particularly during crises when imperial authority was unstable and challenged. The situation in 193, after Pertinax died, clearly illustrates this. While Didius Iulianus was able to seize power in Rome by using his fortune to gain support of the praetorian guard, his most important rivals were three provincial governors: Pescennius Niger in Syria, Clodius Albinus in Britannia and Septimius Severus in Pannonia Superior. Because the latter had the support of more troops than the others, he won the imperial throne. Moreover, having himself used his position as governor-commander to seize the Principate, Severus realized the danger should an individual governor control too large a military force, so it can hardly be coincidental that the provinces of his former rivals were subdivided into two during or not long after Severus' reign.⁸³

Moreover, senators were deployed as troubleshooters, serving as generals of special army detachments drawn from the legions. Such generals (mostly *duces* or occasionally *praepositi*) were linked to these detachments for a specific purpose, a particular military expedition. If proven successful, a general and his field army could be put into action at other campaigns as well. Although Severus sent a provincial governor to remedy at least one military crisis (Virius Lupus against Albinus), he usually sent men from outside the province to solve military crises. Occasionally, especially in his earlier campaigns, Severus chose senators from senatorial families who were in the more advanced (consular) stage of their careers as generals, such as Anullinus. The support of such men may helped legitimize his position toward senators in his early reign. On the other hand, senators of lower rank, most of them *homines novi*, also commanded considerable forces in critical times.⁸⁴ Marius Maximus and Septimius Castinus were mere *legati legionis* before they were made

⁸³ As mentioned above, Syria was divided into Syria Phoenice and Syria Coele in 193. The exact date of the subdivision of Britannia into Britannia Inferior and Britannia Superior, which Herodianus 3, 8, 2, places ca. 197/198, is heavily disputed. Graham (1966), 97–107, however, convincingly argues that the division must have occurred after Severus' death in 211, probably under Caracalla ca. 213/214. On the discussion, see Birley (2005), 333–336, with further references.

⁸⁴ Another provincial governor who may have played a role in Severus' battle against Albinus was Geta, but as he was Severus' brother, deploying him did not involve too much risk.

duces. Candidus and Claudianus were also of praetorian rank at the time of their (first) generalships.

Other senators had commissions as advisers (*comites*) in the imperial entourage during campaigns. Under Severus, this group also contained senators who had little or no military experience, but who could nonetheless contribute to the campaign. Their wealth, their status and influence (particularly in Rome) and of course their connections with other senators helped Severus strengthen his position, which the emperor obviously considered necessary at the beginning of his career. Hedijs Rufus Lollianus Gentianus is a good example of such a senator, as well as Fabius Cilo, who was initially sent to Thracia to prevent Niger from advancing any further westward, but who in a wise move was transferred to the emperor's entourage after his defeat. Iunius Faustinus Placidus Postumianus and Iulius Avitus Alexianus, *comites* in Britannia, were of a different order, as they had gained experience in the military and logistics of war.

Beneath the senatorial generals operated a group of lower commanders, primarily *equites*. Valerius Valerianus, for instance, was as equestrian commander (*praepositus*) subordinate to Anullinus. The same seems to have applied to Avitus Alexianus, who operated under Fabius Cilo in Moesia Superior circa 195. Oclatinus Adventus, who may have been sent to Britannia with a special task in preparing Severus' expedition, was perhaps not subordinate to Alfenus Senecio. On the other hand, in view of the obscurity of his exact range of duties and his extraordinary career, he may not have been representative of the position of *equites* involved in the military under Severus.

As said above, Severus sought senatorial support at the beginning of his career, but some senatorial generals, especially senators from senatorial families, served only sporadically in military events and were then transferred to positions of a more civil-administrative nature. Severus thus made sure that those men whose status and connections gave them easy access to money and senatorial support were not given too many troops, since a concentration of military power under any of them would increase the danger of a coup.⁸⁵ Other military officers saw action more

⁸⁵ Cf. *HA, Vita Sev.* 15, 4–6: '... he even went so far as to bring charges against several of his own friends on the ground that they were plotting to kill him. He put numerous others to death on the charge of having asked Chaldeans or soothsayers how long he was destined to live; and he was especially suspicious of anyone who seemed qualified for the imperial power ...'

often, since Severus obviously needed capable generals as long as he had not ended the civil and Parthian wars. Whatever happened exactly will always be unclear, but after the incident with Laetus, Severus seems to have exercised more restraint in his attitude toward his (former) generals, even those who were *homines novi*. Most of them were granted consular rank and were appointed consular governor once or twice before their careers were (temporarily) stopped. Others' careers ended abruptly immediately after 198. Some generals served again in civil-administrative posts under Caracalla. It is striking, however, that these former generals were never again commissioned in times of war, not even by Severus during his campaign in Britannia. Severus thus made sure that none of his high-ranking military officers was able to combine high senatorial status and military power and become a threat to his imperial authority. The trend toward replacing senatorial officers, legionary commanders and governors of military provinces with equestrian officers, who were appointed *agens vice praesidis* or *agens vice legati legionis*, which started from 200 onward, should perhaps also be seen in this perspective.

In sum, when Severus claimed the imperial throne, his power was essentially based on the support of the legions stationed in the Rhine and Danube area. During the wars in the first years of his reign, Severus depended much on his military officers. At that point, he tried to strengthen his position by seeking support among the senatorial elite. The combination of their high status and some experience in military offices made them suitable candidates for posts as military officers. Alongside them, other senators, who had gained more experience in the military sphere, especially *homines novi*, but who could not compete in status with the senatorial elite, were also appointed as high-ranking military officers. Militarily skilled *equites* were appointed as senatorial generals' subordinates. Only rarely did they have final responsibility in military crises. Between 198 and 208, however, when the Empire was at peace, Severus was able himself to dispose of those men who could pose a threat to his position: some were promoted to high civil-administrative posts; others disappeared from our view, permanently or temporarily. A few years later, when Severus needed military officers for his British expedition, none of his former generals of the civil and Parthian wars went into action again.

4.2. Gallienus and His Military Officers

In 253, Valerianus was proclaimed emperor. In the same year, he made his son Gallienus co-emperor. Gallienus became the Empire's sole ruler when Valerianus was captured by the Persians in 260, the first time that the Empire had experienced the humiliation of a ruler falling into hostile hands. The consequences manifested themselves immediately: while barbaric tribes invaded the border regions continually, usurpers emerged in both the East and the West.

The Beginning of Gallienus' Sole Reign: The West (260–262)

Table 4.6. Men involved in military events in the West (260–262)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>
Aureolus	<i>Dux equitum</i> 260 / 268
Claudius (II Gothicus)	<i>Dux</i> ?? ca. 262?
Ingenuus	Senior commander (<i>dux</i>) of (<i>vexillationes</i>) of the Pannonian (and Moesian) legions (governor?) 253 / 260
Postumus	Officer (<i>dux</i> ?) in command of (<i>vexillationes</i>) of Rhine legions (or governor of Germania Inf.) 260
Regalianus	<i>Dux</i> (or governor?) in Illyricum (253 / 260)

When the news of Valerianus' capture reached the West, Germanic tribes had already penetrated the Rhine border and seized the Agri Decumates (the area between the Rhine and the Neckar). Gallienus probably was in or near Milan fighting the Iuthungi, who had by then invaded northern Italy.⁸⁶ Gallienus finally defeated the Germanic invaders in midsummer AD 260. But probably at the same time a certain Ingenuus, whose origins and early career are a mystery to us, headed a revolt against Gallienus in Pannonia.⁸⁷ Ingenuus' office at the time of his rebellion cannot be determined with certainty. According to the sources, he 'governed' (Lat: *regebat*) or 'took care of' (Lat: *curans*) the Pannonian provinces or

⁸⁶ Sources for the invasions in the West: Aurelius Victor, *Liber de Caesaribus* 33, 3; Zosimus 1, 37; Zonaras 12, 24; Eutropius 9, 8; Orosius 7, 22, 7. See Potter (2004), 256–257; Drinkwater (2007), 52–55, with further references.

⁸⁷ Aurelius Victor, *Liber de Caesaribus* 33, 2 called him Ingebus. Orosius 7, 22, 10 called him Genuus. In most sources, however, he is called Ingenuus. On Ingenuus, see *PIR*² I 23; *PLRE* I, Ingenuus 1, Bleckmann (1992), 226–237, Johne-Hartmann-Gerhardt (2008), 1162–1163, with further references.

legions.⁸⁸ The *Historia Augusta* reports that Ingenuus was proclaimed emperor by the Moesian legions. In that case, it is more likely that Ingenuus was a *dux* who held the command over (*vexillationes* in) the Pannonian and Moesian legions than a provincial governor of several Illyrian provinces.⁸⁹ This conjecture finds support in the parallels of appointments in those days in Illyricum. The date of Ingenuus' usurpation has been heavily disputed, because of unclear literary sources. Nowadays it is assumed that it took place in 260, in reaction to Valerianus' defeat and capture.⁹⁰ It has been suggested that Ingenuus was supervisor of Gallienus' son Valerianus and that Ingenuus' position became insecure after Valerianus II died in 258. Although this may have been an additional motive for the usurpation, this hypothesis lacks confirming evidence.⁹¹

As Gallienus found himself in the middle of a campaign against the Iuthungi, he sent Aureolus to solve the situation in Pannonia. The *Historia Augusta* reports that Aureolus, allegedly a man of humble birth from Dacia, served in the army under Valerianus.⁹² By 260, he seems to have risen to the position of cavalry commander, in which capacity he fought against the usurper Ingenuus.⁹³ Using the advantage of the mobility of

⁸⁸ *HA, Vita Trig. Tyr.* 9, 1: 'qui Pannonias tunc regebat'; Aurelius Victor, *Liber de Caesaribus* 33, 2: 'curans Pannonos'.

⁸⁹ Cf. Goltz-Hartmann (2008), 242; 262–263, who assume that Ingenuus held a 'provinzübergreifenden Sonderkommando in beiden pannonischen und wohl auch moesischen Provinzen'. Luther (2008), 326–327, however, considers Ingenuus governor of the Pannonian and Moesian provinces.

⁹⁰ If we may believe *HA, Vita Trig. Tyr.* 9, 1, Ingenuus was proclaimed emperor in the consulship of Tuscus and Bassus, AD 258. Aurelius Victor, *Liber de Caesaribus* 33, 2, and Zonaras 12, 24, on the other hand, date the revolt after the capture of Valerianus in AD 260. Fitz (1966c) has argued that the revolt should be dated in 258. This date was accepted by De Blois (1976), 4. However, more recently, Drinkwater (1987), 104–105, and Potter (1990), 52, have argued convincingly that the revolt should be dated in 260. That the date is still debateable, however, follows from propositions referred to in Drinkwater (2007), 54–55, to date the revolt mid-259 into early 260. Cf. Goltz-Hartmann (2008), 262–263, note 203, with further references.

⁹¹ See Fitz (1966c), 26–28; Drinkwater (1987), 22; 103; Bleckmann (1992), 226–227, with further references.

⁹² On Aureolus' humble birth and Dacian origins, see Syncellus 717 (Mosshammer (1984), p. 467). Cf. De Blois (1976), 43: 'According to the romanticised account given by Zonaras (12, 24) Aureolus was a Getan shepherd. He entered the army, distinguished himself in the stables and ended up as Gallienus' cavalry commander.' On Aureolus entering the army under Valerianus: *HA, Vita Trig. Tyr.* 10, 14.

⁹³ Aureolus as general in Illyricum: *HA, Vita Gall.* 2, 6; 3, 3; *Trig. Tyr.* 11, 1; Aureolus as cavalry commander: Zosimus 1, 40, 1 (τὸν τῆς ἵππου πάσης ἡγευόμενον); Zonaras 12, 24–25 (πάσης ἄρχων τῆς ἵππου). Aureolus was the first general of whom it is claimed that he commanded a new corps of mobile cavalry which Gallienus composed from detachments

the cavalry, Aureolus defeated Ingenuus at Mursa (Pannonia Inferior).⁹⁴ Ingenuus then took his own life or was killed by his attendant soldiers during his flight.⁹⁵

Ingenuus' defeat did not end the problems in Illyricum, for Danubian troops proclaimed Regalianus emperor against Gallienus in Moesia.⁹⁶ The *Historia Augusta* claims that Regalianus was of Dacian origin and that he had been made *dux Illyrici* by Valerianus.⁹⁷ Some scholars thought he was a senator, asserting that he was the governor of several senatorial Illyrian provinces (Moesia, Pannonia Superior). Against this, several other scholars suggest that he was sent to Illyricum as military *dux* and not as governor. This view, according to which he was not necessarily of senatorial rank is just as plausible, if not far more likely.⁹⁸

It is unclear to what extent Regalianus was involved in Ingenuus' revolt. If we are to believe Aurelius Victor, Regalianus gathered the survivors of Ingenuus' coup and continued the latter's rebellion.⁹⁹ As both of them operated in the same area, it is unlikely that Regalianus was unaware of Ingenuus' revolt. Even if he did not support or actively interfere in it, he may have given Gallienus the idea that he did by avoiding any serious attempt to put the rebellion down. If so, he had no other choice than to claim the imperial throne for himself after Ingenuus' defeat.

and rearrangements of the cavalry of legions. Aureolus is referred to and described as *hipparchos*, but no official terminology is being used to describe the position, as Simon (1980), 437, points out. On Aureolus as a general of a new corps of mobile cavalry, see Paschoud (1996), 108. On Gallienus' cavalry reforms, see also Simon (1980), 435–452; Bleckmann (1992), 226–237. On Aureolus' role in Ingenuus' defeat, see Zonaras 12, 24; cf. Bleckmann (1992), 227–228; Goltz-Hartmann (2008), 263.

⁹⁴ On Ingenuus' defeat, see *HA, Vita Trig. Tyr.* 9; Aurelius Victor, *Liber de Caesaribus* 33, 2; Eutropius 9, 8; Zonaras 12, 24.

⁹⁵ *HA, Vita Trig. Tyr.* 9, 4, claims that Ingenuus committed suicide. Zonaras, 12, 24, claims that he was killed by his soldiers. The fact that Ingenuus issued no coins, indicates that he reigned for only a short time.

⁹⁶ On Regalianus, see *PIR² R 36; PLRE I, Regalianus*, and Bleckmann (1992), 237–239; Johne-Hartmann-Gerhardt (2008), 1163, with further references. On Regalianus' revolt, see *HA, Vita Trig. Tyr.* 10; *Epitome de Caesaribus* 32, 3.

⁹⁷ Dacian origin is claimed by *HA, Vita Trig. Tyr.* 10, 8, which also asserts that Regalianus was a kinsman of Decebalus, the king of Dacians whom Traianus defeated in 107, which is very questionable. On Regalianus' position as *dux Illyrici*: *HA, Vita Trig. Tyr.* 10, 1; 10, 9.

⁹⁸ Scholars who assume that Regalianus was a senatorial governor are Barbieri (1952), 307, no. 1712; Degrassi (1952), 71; Thomasson (1972–1990), 108; 130; Goltz-Hartmann (2008), 264; Heil (2008a), 723, note 36, with further references. For the view that Regalianus was a military *dux*, see *RE* 5, 1869 ff., based on *HA, Vita Trig. Tyr.* 10, 8: '*vir in (re) militari semper probatus*'; cf. Christol (1986), 147–149. Cf. *PIR² R 36*, with further references.

⁹⁹ Aurelius Victor, *Liber de Caesaribus* 33, 2.

Regalianus fought successfully against the Sarmatae, who threatened the Danubian provinces, but was defeated not much later. According to the *Historia Augusta*, a coalition of the Roxolani (a Sarmatic tribe) with help from his own soldiers and with provincials who feared Gallienus' reprisals, killed him.¹⁰⁰ As Gallienus was still dealing with the Iunthungi in Italy at that time, the emperor seems to have been unable to deal with Regalianus' rebellion himself. Although none of our sources says so, some have assumed that Aureolus was involved in Regalianus' defeat.¹⁰¹ Either way, Regalianus' revolt appears to have been neither lasting nor widespread.¹⁰²

In an attempt to end invasions of tribes from outside the Empire in the Rhine and Danube area, Gallienus forged treaties with local kings. When Gallienus fought barbarian tribes on the Rhine, he eventually won the upper hand by making peace with a Germanic king who thereafter guarded the Rhine frontier in Gallia.¹⁰³ Unfortunately, little is known about the exact circumstances of this agreement. We are better informed on a pact Gallienus struck with Attalus, king of the Marcomanni, on the middle Danube. The Marcomanni had invaded Pannonia in 254. It was probably around 258 that Gallienus came to an alliance with Attalus, allowing the Marcomanni to settle in Pannonia. Although the hostile senatorial sources accused Gallienus of doing this to win Attalus' daughter Pipa as a concubine, the pact makes more sense as an attempt to outsource the defense of parts of the frontier regions into foreign hands. Speidel argues that the Marcomanni not only served as border guards but also as mobile elite forces, high-ranking units of the imperial field army, with their king, rather than Roman officers, in command.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰ *HA, Vita Trig. Tyr.* 10, 1–2. Cf. Aurelius Victor, *Liber de Caesaribus* 33, 2; Eutropius 9, 8, 1, in which Gallienus (i.e. Aureolus?) is mentioned as Ingenuus' killer. The account of the *Historia Augusta* was accepted by several scholars. See Fitz (1966c), 58–63; Drinkwater (1987), 105. On Gallienus fighting against the Alamanni at the same time, see Halfmann (1986), 237; Drinkwater (2007), 54–55.

¹⁰¹ See Saria (1937); Fitz (1966c); Alföldi (1967), 101 f.

¹⁰² The small number of coins struck by Regalianus suggests that his reign was very short. Furthermore, all the coinage of Regalianus and his wife were struck over other old coins, and the only mint to issue coins for them was the mint of Carnuntum (Pannonia), which seems to have been the center of Regalianus' revolt. *HA, Vita Gall.* 9, 1, suggests that Regalianus was still in power in 263, but this seems incorrect: see *PIR*² R 36, with further references.

¹⁰³ Zosimus 1, 30.

¹⁰⁴ On Gallienus' treaty with the Marcomanni, see *Epitome de Caesaribus* 33, 1; Speidel (2006), 73–76. On Germanic kings as Roman army tribunes, see id. (2006), 75, note 14, with further references.

Despite all these efforts, Gallienus' authority was not restored completely in the West. He was faced with one more usurper, who would accomplish segregation within the western part of the Empire: Cassianus Latinus Postumus.¹⁰⁵ During the revolt of Ingenuus, Gallienus put Postumus in charge of the armies guarding Gallia and the Rhine area, perhaps as *dux* or governor, but his exact position cannot be determined.¹⁰⁶ Apparently, Postumus' troops were displeased for some reason and decided to rebel. They proclaimed their commander emperor, probably in the spring or early summer of 260.¹⁰⁷ Postumus and his troops marched on Cologne and besieged the city, in which Gallienus' son Saloninus and his guardian Silvanus had their headquarters.¹⁰⁸ Even-

¹⁰⁵ His full name can be found in several inscriptions, for instance, *CIL* 2.4943 = *ILS* 562 (Hispania Citerior); 13.8879; 8882–8883; 9855–9856; 8972, 9023 = *ILS* 561 (Lugdunensis), *AE* 1924, 1 (Britannia); *AE* 1958, 58 (Aquitania). *Epitome de Caesaribus* 32, 3, calls him Cassius Labienus Postumus.

¹⁰⁶ *HA, Vita Trig. Tyr.* 3,9 ('*Transrhenani limitis dux et Galliae praeses*'), Zosimus 1, 38, 2 ('*barbaris per Galliam praesidebat*'), Zonaras 12, 24. Perhaps Postumus was *dux ripae* or *dux limitis*, or *praeses* or senatorial *legatus* in Germania Inferior, as Drinkwater (1987), 25–26, and Eck (1985), 222–224, suggest. Eck (2004), 561–562, however, asserts that Postumus was 'ritterlicher Amtsträger mit einem umfassenden militärischen Aufgabebereich'. See John-Hartmann-Gerhardt (2008), 1126, summing up all the suggestions, with further references. According to Eutropius 9, 9, 1, Postumus was of humble origin. The epigraphic and numismatic evidence suggest that Postumus had been awarded *ornamenta consularia* before his usurpation, which would point to high standing at the imperial court of Gallienus. See König (1981), 52; 66. Postumus must also have been superior to M. Simplicinius Genialis, *vir perfectissimus, agens vice praesidis*, commanding soldiers of the province of Rhaetia, Germany, and by the militia, who is mentioned in *AE* 1993, 1231 (Augsburg). See Potter (2004), 256.

¹⁰⁷ *HA, Vita Trig. Tyr.* 3, 2–4; *Gall.* 4, 3; Zosimus 1, 38, 2; Aurelius Victor, *Liber de Caesaribus* 33, 8; *Epitome de Caesaribus* 32, 3; Eutropius 9, 9. The date of Postumus' revolt is highly disputed. Currently it is generally assumed that it took place in AD 260, between May and July. See Potter (2004), 256–257, who quotes the inscription found in Augsburg (*AE* 1993, 1231); cf. König (1981), 4–19; Drinkwater (1987), 95–102; Strobel (1993), 245; Jehne (1996).

¹⁰⁸ According to Zosimus 1, 38, 2 and Zonaras 12, 24, Silvanus (called Albanus by Zonaras), was entrusted with the care of Gallienus' son Saloninus, while Postumus was left in command of the Rhine frontier. *HA, Vita Trig. Tyr.* 3, 1, claims that Postumus was entrusted with the care of Saloninus, but has probably mistaken him for Silvanus. See Bleckmann (1992), 245. It has been suggested that Silvanus was *praefectus praetorio* in 260. Howe (1942), 81, no. 50; König (1981), 47, posits that Silvanus merely carried out the civil duties of the praetorian prefect and that the tension between Postumus and Silvanus was caused by tension between bureaucracy and the military. According to Bleckmann (1992), 246, note 101, such a sharp division between the military and bureaucracy was unlikely during the reign of Gallienus. Allegedly, a quarrel between Postumus and Silvanus over the distribution of booty taken from barbarians caused the rebellion. On this matter, see Zon. 12, 24; Bleckmann (1992), 242–248, with further references.

tually, the garrison of Cologne handed these two members of Gallienus' *familia* over to Postumus and they were put to death. Postumus became the first emperor of the so-called 'Gallic empire'; he controlled not only the provinces of the Rhineland, but also the inland provinces of Gallia (except Narbonensis) and Britannia.¹⁰⁹

When Postumus seized power, Gallienus was finishing his campaign against the Alamanni, followed by a stay in Rome. His successful general Aureolus was restoring Gallienus' authority in the East, after the Macriani had seized power (see below). Although there are indications that Aureolus was sent against Postumus in 262, the available literary evidence is downright confusing. The *Historia Augusta* claims that Aureolus seized imperial power around 262, after the defeat of the Macriani, but also records that Aureolus joined Gallienus not much later in an attempt to overthrow Postumus; these two claims seem to rule each other out.¹¹⁰ According to the *Historia Augusta*, however, Gallienus reconciled with Aureolus after his attempt to seize power.¹¹¹ The date of this campaign against Postumus, in which Gallienus seems to have recaptured Raetia, is highly disputed; it may have taken place later in Gallienus' reign.¹¹²

The *Historia Augusta* claims that another man was involved as *dux* in Gallienus' campaign against Postumus: Aurelius Claudius, better known as the emperor Claudius II Gothicus.¹¹³ Claudius was allegedly born in Illyricum during Caracalla's reign.¹¹⁴ References to Claudius' early career

¹⁰⁹ According to Drinkwater (1987), 27–28; 116 ff., Postumus gained control over the entire west soon after the summer of AD 260, well before 261. There is no evidence that Postumus actually intended to create a separate *imperium*. Only Eutropius 9, 9, 3, mentions a *Galliarum imperium*. In his propaganda, Postumus placed himself in the tradition of the emperors of the central Empire, and his administration was patterned after the central Empire.

¹¹⁰ On Aureolus' imperial acclamation, see *HA, Vita Gall.* 2, 6; 3, 1; *Tyr. Trig.* 11, 1; 12, 2; 12, 14; 18, 1; 18, 3. On Aureolus fighting Postumus and the reconciliation, see *HA, Vita Gall.* 4, 6; 7, 1; 21, 5; *Tyr. Trig.* 11, 3; *Aurel.* 16, 1.

¹¹¹ The possibility that the author of the *Historia Augusta* confused the situation and Aureolus' imperial acclamation in 268 with the course of events in this previous campaign against Postumus should not be ruled out. On this matter, see Alföldi (1967), 2–3; Bleckmann (1992), 248–251; 254–255; Paschoud (1996), 108.

¹¹² See Goltz-Hartmann (2008), 274, note 240, supplying further references on the suggested dates for this campaign. They date it ca. 266–267. Gallienus was allegedly wounded in the battle against Postumus, see *HA, Gall.* 4, 4–6; *Trig. Tyr.* 3, 5; Zonaras 12, 23.

¹¹³ *HA, Vita Gall.* 7, 1. Cf. Goltz-Hartmann (2008), 274, note 239.

¹¹⁴ *HA, Vita Claud.*, 11, 9, claims that Claudius was of Dalmatian or Dardanic origin. Cf. *HA, Vita Claud.* 14, 2: '*Illyricianae gentis vir*'. The information may have been invented by the *Historia Augusta's* author. The claims that Claudius was the son of a Gordianus (*Épitome de Caesaribus* 34, 1) and that he was related to Probus (*HA, Vita Prob.* 3, 2–

can be found in letters attributed to Decius, Valerianus and Gallienus in the *Historia Augusta*, which are generally considered fictitious. According to these letters, Claudius served several tenures as *tribunus* and was made general of Illyricum (*dux totius Illyrici*) by Valerianus, commanding the armies of Thracia, Moesia, Dalmatia, Pannonia and Dacia. The posts, like the letters, were probably inventions.¹¹⁵ However, it is not unlikely that Claudius had served in the army for quite some time, beginning no later than Gallienus' reign.¹¹⁶

Whether an attempt to regain the Gallic part of the Empire was made in 262 or not remains uncertain. What can be concluded is that any possible attempts were unsuccessful: for the time being, the Gallic empire continued to exist.

The Beginning of Gallienus' Sole Reign: Meanwhile in the East (260–262)

Table 4.7. Men involved in military events in the East (260–262)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>
Aureolus	<i>Dux equitum</i> 260 / 268
Ballista	<i>Praefectus praetorio</i> or <i>dux</i> under Valerianus <i>Praefectus praetorio</i> under the Macriani
Domitianus	<i>Dux</i> under Aureolus 261
Fulvius Macrianus	<i>Procurator arcae et praepositus annonae</i> during Valerianus' Persian campaign 259 / 260
Memor	In charge of Egypt's corn supply 262
Mussius Aemilianus	<i>Praefectus Aegypti</i> 260–261
Septimius Odaenathus	<i>Exarchos</i> of Palmyra 250s Governor of Syria Phoenice? 258 Troubleshooter in the East (<i>dux Romanorum</i> and <i>corrector/rector Orientis</i>) from 260 / 261 onward
Theodotus	<i>Dux</i> commanding a fleet and troops 261–262 <i>Praefectus Aegypti</i> 262–263
Valens	<i>Proconsul Achaiae</i> and/or military commander in Macedonia 260 / 261

4), are generally considered fictitious, as well as his connection to Constantius Chlorus, which was made public only in the panegyric of 310 (*HA, Vita Claud.* 13, 1–3; *Pan. Lat.* 6, 2, 2, *Panegyric of Constantius*, ed. Mynors-Nixon-Rodgers (1994), 219–220; 573).

¹¹⁵ On this, see Damerau (1934), 21–24, and Syme (1971), 215–216. Cf. Hartmann (2008a), 298. If Claudius was indeed general in Illyricum, one would expect him to have been involved in the campaigns against Ingenuus and Regalianus as well. Yet, no mention of this is made in the sources.

¹¹⁶ It is noteworthy that the fourth-century author of the *Historia Augusta* credited Valerianus with appointing Claudius as *dux* in Illyricum. Perhaps Illyricum acted as a

After the Persians had captured Valerianus and while Gallienus was far away in the West, the eastern troops wanted to choose their own emperor. Two men, who had accompanied Valerianus on his Persian campaign, came to the fore: Ballista and Fulvius Macrianus. Ballista's office at the time of Valerianus' capture is uncertain. According to the *Historia Augusta*, Ballista was Valerianus' *praefectus*. Although the author does not specify the prefecture, it is generally assumed that he referred to Ballista as Valerianus' praetorian prefect. However, Ballista is also referred to as a general (*dux*; στρατηγός). Whichever title he held, Ballista campaigned with success against the Persians during Valerianus' campaign.¹¹⁷

Fulvius Macrianus, as discussed in Chapter 3 (section 3.1), organized money and supplies for the army in the East during Valerianus' Persian expedition. According to Eusebius, Macrianus did not help Valerianus when he was captured by the Persians.¹¹⁸ Allegedly, Ballista immediately offered Macrianus the imperial throne.¹¹⁹ Macrianus had control over the imperial treasure and the army supplies in the East and thus had the most essential resources at his disposal. He was also able to mint coins. Furthermore, the support of Ballista, who had been successful against the Persians, would contribute to the legitimization of his claim for power. Nevertheless, Macrianus refused and suggested that his sons, Macrianus minor and Quietus, share the emperorship. They were proclaimed not long afterwards, their rule being accepted in the East including Egypt.¹²⁰

transitional area between the territory under Gallienus' care in the West and Valerianus' territory in the East, where additional leadership was badly needed.

¹¹⁷ On Ballista as (praetorian) prefect, see *HA, Vita Trig. Tyr.* 12, 1. On Ballista as general, see *HA, Vita Val.* 4, 4; Zonaras 12, 23 (calling him Kallistos); Syncellus 716 (Mosshammer (1984), p. 466). The author of the *Historia Augusta* states (*HA, Vita Tyr. Trig.* 18, 12–13) that even as he was writing his account, the reports on Ballista were doubtful and inconsistent. On Ballista, see *PIR*² B 41; *PLRE* I, Ballista; Goltz-Hartmann (2008), 259–262. On Ballista as praetorian prefect under Valerianus, see Johne-Hartmann-Gerhardt (2008), 1073, PPO 14, with further references.

¹¹⁸ Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 7, 23, 1.

¹¹⁹ *HA, Vita Gall.*, 1, 2–3; *Trig. Tyr.*, 12, 3–12; 14, 1.

¹²⁰ On Macrianus maior's refusal and the reasons for it, see *HA, Vita Gall.* 1, 3; *Tyr. Trig.* 12, 12; Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 7, 10, 8; Zonaras 12, 24; Continuator Dionis, Petrus Patricius, *Excerpta de Sententiis*, ed. Boissevain, p. 264, 159. *HA, Vita Gall.* 1, 3; *Tyr. Trig.* 12, 12, mentions that Macrianus became emperor together with his sons, but seems to be mistaken. The report in *HA, Vita Tyr. Trig.* 12, 10, that the sons of Macrianus had both served as military tribunes under Valerianus, is probably fictitious. On the Macriani, see *PIR*² F 546; *PLRE* I, Macrianus 2; Macrianus 3; *PIR*² F 547; *PLRE* I, Quietus 1. See Goltz-Hartmann (2008), 260, note 195, with further references, and 261, note 196, with references on where their rule was accepted.

Ballista was sent to Asia Minor, where he triumphed over the Persians again. Then he returned to Syria, where he became praetorian prefect of the Macriani.¹²¹ While Macrianus maior and Macrianus minor marched westwards to provoke a confrontation with Gallienus, Quietus and Ballista stayed in the East. Since Gallienus was at that time dealing with a raid of Iuthungi in northern Italy, he sent Aureolus in response to their provocation. Aureolus' *dux* Domitianus finally defeated the Macriani at the Balkans in the summer or autumn of 261. The unsuccessful emperors were then killed by their own soldiers.¹²²

After his father and brother had been defeated in Illyricum, Quietus lost control in the East, while another man gained power: Septimius Odaenathus.¹²³ Odaenathus was born circa 220 in Palmyra, which was by that time a *colonia* within the Roman Empire.¹²⁴ He seems to have been from a noble Palmyran family.¹²⁵ The name Septimius may indicate that Odaenathus' family had received Roman citizenship under one of the Severan emperors. In that case it is likely that Odaenathus' family was a leading kin in Palmyra since about the beginning of the third century.¹²⁶ Little is known about Odaenathus' career before Valerianus' capture. In the early 250s, Odaenathus was promoted to *exarchos* (ἑξάρχος, 'chief') of Palmyra.¹²⁷ In this position, Odaenathus had full military authority, which enabled him to reinforce the troops of Palmyra.¹²⁸ At about the same time, he was granted senatorial status, which promoted him from the local Palmyran elite into the imperial elite ('Reichsaristokratie') and

¹²¹ Ballista as praetorian prefect of the Macriani, see *HA, Vita Gall.*, 3, 2; *Trig. Tyr.*, 14, 1; 18, 13. Zonaras 12, 24, refers to him as cavalry commander (ἵππαρχος).

¹²² *HA, Vita Gall.* 2, 5–7; 3, 1; *Tyr. Trig.* 11, 1–2; 12, 12–14; Zonaras 12, 24. On Domitianus (*PIR*² D 114) as *dux Aureoli*, see *HA, Vita Gall.* 2, 6; *Trig. Tyr.* 12, 14; 13, 3.

¹²³ On Odaenathus, see *PIR*² S 472; *PLRE* I, Odaenathus. On his career, see Hartmann (2001), 86 ff., and Hartmann (2008c), 346–351, with further references.

¹²⁴ Millar (1990), 42–46.

¹²⁵ According to Zosimus 1, 39, 1, Septimius Odaenathus was highly esteemed because the emperors had honored his ancestors. A group of bilingual inscriptions (Palmyrene Aramaic and Greek) render Odaenathus' ascendants. See Gawlikowski (1985).

¹²⁶ Hartmann (2001), 88–90, suggests that Roman citizenship was bestowed upon the family in the mid-second century. He acknowledges, however, the importance of the family at the beginning of the third century.

¹²⁷ Gawlikowski (1985), 257 n. 13 = *SEG* 35, 1497 = 38, 1580.

¹²⁸ On the military connotations of the title *exarchos*, see Hartmann (2001), 92–94. Potter (1990), 389, also suggests that the title reflected Odaenathus' command of the Palmyrene militia. Eventually, Odaenathus' son Hairan was also given the title *exarchos*, which turned the position into a hereditary post. See Hartmann (2001), 102.

enabled him to occupy positions in the imperial service.¹²⁹ By granting him senatorial status, Rome supported Odaenathus' ascent. Circa 257/8, Odaenathus became *vir consularis*, either by holding an actual suffect consulship, by being accepted *inter consulares*, or by being granted *ornamenta consularia*.¹³⁰ Inscriptions which can be dated around 258, call Odaenathus λαμπρότατος ὑπατικός. This Greek term may have honored Odaenathus for reaching consular rank, as Potter argues, but can also indicate that Odaenathus was governor of Syria Phoenice at that point.¹³¹

After Ballista had defeated the Persians at Cilicia in the summer of 260, Odaenathus attacked them at the Euphrates, while they were retreating, after which they withdrew from Roman territory.¹³² Ballista and Quietus retreated to Emesa, where they heard the news of Macrianus maior's and minor's deaths. Then, the city's inhabitants killed Quietus in the autumn of 261. It remains unclear whether Ballista instigated this or whether Odaenathus played a role.¹³³ Ballista himself was probably killed soon afterwards by Odaenathus.¹³⁴ In 260, Gallienus gave Odaenathus an official position as troubleshooter in the East. Although his exact titles are not directly attested, it has been suggested that he was made *dux Romanorum* after his victory over the Persians and then *corrector totius Orientis* after Quietus' defeat. In that way, he united the highest available

¹²⁹ Hartmann (2001), 97, claims that Odaenathus was accepted into the senate through *adlectio*.

¹³⁰ *IGRR* 3, 1031 (Palmyra). Potter (1990), 389–390, argues for merely honorific *ornamenta consularia*. Hartmann (2001), 104–105, argues for a position as *consul suffectus in absentia*. Cf. Hartmann (2001), 104, note 167, with further references.

¹³¹ The term *hypatikos* (ὑπατικός) was used for the governor of the province of Syria since the second century. A Tyrian text has been taken to show that Odaenathus' title *lamprotatos hypatikos* (λαμπρότατος ὑπατικός) indicates that he was governor of Syria Phoenice, probably in 258. According to Potter (1990), 389–390, *ton lamprotat(on)* (τον λαμπρότατον) can easily be interpreted to mean no more than *ho lamprotatos sunkletikos* (ὁ λαμπρότατος συγκλητικός, 'the clarissimus senator'). He adds that a parallel with Abgar IX offers the possibility that Odaenathus was given the *ornamenta consularia*. Millar (1993), 165, implies that Odaenathus might have held the governorship, possibly enhanced by separate consular honors. Hartmann (2001), 105–108, considers serious the possibility that Odaenathus was governor of Syria Phoenice.

¹³² On the lines of march of Ballista and Odaenathus, see Kettenhofen (1982), 106–113. Cf. Goltz-Hartmann (2008), 259, with further references. Hartmann (2001), 106, uses Odaenathus' command over Roman legions in 260 to support his assertion of Odaenathus' governorship of Syria Phoenice and consequent membership in Roman administration at that time.

¹³³ On Quietus' death, see *HA, Vita Gall.* 3, 1–5; *Trig. Tyr.* 15, 4; 18, 1; Zonaras 12, 24; Continuator Dionis, Petrus Patricius, *Excerpta de Sententiis*, ed. Boissvain, p. 266, 167.

¹³⁴ *HA, Vita Tyr. Trig.* 14, 1; 18, 1–3; Zonaras 12, 24.

military and civil power in the area and he was thus *de facto* ruling the East.¹³⁵ Apparently, Gallienus accepted Odaenathus' military authority in the East, and even rewarded him with extraordinary Roman honors to encourage continuing allegiance and further support.

As said above, Egypt accepted the rule of the Macriani. Coins struck by Macrianus and Quietus in Alexandria show that the *praefectus Aegypti* Mussius Aemilianus, whose career is discussed in Chapter 3 (section 3.1), had supported the rival emperors. After the Macriani were overthrown, Mussius Aemilianus was proclaimed emperor himself and stopped the grain supply to Rome late 261. He probably had no other choice than to rebel himself after he had backed the wrong party.¹³⁶ The fleet and troops sent by Gallienus under the command of *dux* Aurelius Theodotus soon overthrew Mussius Aemilianus. Theodotus captured Aemilianus and sent him to Gallienus.¹³⁷ Another rebel arose in the East after Aemilianus' defeat: Memor, who was of Moorish origin, was in charge of the corn supply in Egypt. Allegedly, Theodotus and his men killed Memor before he was proclaimed *imperator*.¹³⁸ Subsequently, Theodotus was appointed *praefectus Aegypti* by Gallienus, circa July/September 262.¹³⁹

Supposedly, the provinces of Achaia and Macedonia also became involved somehow in the struggle between Gallienus and the Macriani. According to the *Historia Augusta*, the Macriani, preparing their expedition to the Balkans, ordered a consular senator named Piso (with the nickname 'Frugi') to depose Valens from his commission. Although Valens is attested as proconsul of Achaia, it is more likely that he (also)

¹³⁵ Syncellus 716 (Mosshammer 1984), pp. 466–467, dates the appointment after Odaenathus' initial success against the Persians; Zonaras 12, 24, after he had suppressed Quietus and Ballista. On the suggestion that Odaenathus was *dux Romanorum* and then *corrector totius Orientis*, see Hartmann (2008c), 351–352, basing this position on the titles used by Vaballathus, Odaenathus' son. Potter (1990), 391–392, however, argues that Vaballathus must have had a different title than Odaenathus. He suggests that this title should be translated *restitutor* rather than *corrector*.

¹³⁶ On Mussius Aemilianus *signo* Aegippius, see *PIR*² M 757; *PLRE* I, Aemilianus 6. On his revolt, see *HA*, *Vita Gall.* 4, 1–2; *Trig. Tyr.* 22; *Epitome de Caesaribus* 32, 4. See Goltz-Hartmann (2008), 266–267, with further references.

¹³⁷ On Aemilianus' death, see *HA*, *Vita Gall.* 4, 2; *Trig. Tyr.* 22, 8. On Theodotus, see *PIR*² A 1617; *PLRE* I, Theodotus 4. On Theodotus as *dux*, see *HA*, *Vita Gall.* 4, 2; *Trig. Tyr.* 22, 8–10; 26, 4. See Goltz-Hartmann (2008), 268, with further references in note 218.

¹³⁸ On Memor, see *PIR*² M 490; *PLRE* I, Memor. On his usurpation, see Zosimus 1, 38, 1; Continuator Dionis, Petrus Patricius, *Excerpta de Sententiis*, ed. Boissevain, p. 264, 160. See also Goltz-Hartmann (2008), 268–269, with further references.

¹³⁹ Theodotus is attested as *praefectus Aegypti* from July/September 262, on *P. Strassb.* 1, 5; cf. *P. Oxy.* 17, 2107; 12, 1467. On Theodotus as prefect of Egypt, see Johne-Hartmann-Gerhardt (2008), 1085, Aeg. 14, with further references.

had a military command in Macedonia right then, as Gallienus must have taken measures to defend the Balkans against the advancing troops of the Macriani. That Valens is referred to as *vir militaris* in the *Historia Augusta* supports this hypothesis.¹⁴⁰ Not much later, the soldiers proclaimed both Valens and Piso as (rival) emperors. Valens' troops soon killed Piso, and Valens did not survive his own soldiers much longer.

Gallienus' Protectores

Table 4.8. Gallienus' protectores

Name

Aelius Aelianus (260 / 267)
Aurelius Victor (before 263?)
Petronius Taurus Volusianus (ca. 258)
Traianus Mucianus (after 267)
Valerius Marcellinus (267)

Several military officers under Gallienus received the title *protector*. The earliest attested example is Petronius Taurus Volusianus, whose career is rendered almost completely in an inscription from Etruria.¹⁴¹ As discussed in Chapter 3, Gallienus had promoted Volusianus from *praefectus vigilum* to praetorian prefect shortly after Valerianus' capture. Volusianus and the emperor were the *consules ordinarii* in 261 and it is likely that the prefect was in Rome, when Gallienus celebrated his *Decennalia* with a festival in the capital in 262. By then, the Etruscan Volusianus had gone through a pronounced military career, much of which was spent in Rome.¹⁴² After serving with the *V decuriae* in the capital, Volusianus became *centurio deputatus*. In that capacity, he commanded troops detached from the provincial armies for special imperial service while the

¹⁴⁰ On Piso and Valens, see *HA, Vita Gall.* 2, 1–4; *Tyr. Trig.* 19; 21; Ammianus Marcellinus 21, 16, 10; *Epitome de Caesaribus* 32, 4. Valens as *vir militaris*, see *HA, Tyr. Trig.* 19, 1. Allegedly Piso stem from the noble *gens Calpurnia*, a consular family which traced back its origins to the late Republic. Many scholars consider Piso as fictitious. Cf. *PIR*² P 428; *PLRE* I, Piso 1, with further references.

¹⁴¹ *CIL* 11, 1836 = *ILS* 1332 (Arretium, Italy). On Volusianus' career, see furthermore *PIR*² P 313; *PLRE* I, Volusianus 6; Dobson (1978), 306–308, no. 215. See Goltz-Hartmann (2008), 279, note 254, for further references.

¹⁴² We must note that Volusianus' patronage of Arretium does not necessarily mean that he was born there. It does, however, indicate a strong connection to the region of Etruria. It is noteworthy that the Licinii, the *gens* from which Gallienus descended, were also of Etruscan origin. Dobson (1978), 306, mentions the lack of evidence to support the hypothesis that Volusianus was related to Valerianus and Gallienus.

emperor was present in the capital.¹⁴³ Next, Volusianus was promoted to the position of *primuspilus* in Germania Inferior.¹⁴⁴ He must somehow have caught Valerianus' or Gallienus' attention, as they appointed him *praepositus equitum singularium*, commander of the cavalry contingent which acted as imperial bodyguard.¹⁴⁵ He then served directly under Gallienus in the West for some years in the Danubian area, perhaps as commander in the imperial field army.¹⁴⁶ Next, he was transferred to Rome where he became *tribunus* of a cohort of the *Vigiles*, a *cohors urbana* and a praetorian cohort, respectively. It was probably during his office as *tribunus cohortis praetoriae*, that Volusianus received the title *protector*. It is possible that by the time he held this post, a part of the praetorian guard was transferred to the Balkans to fight along with Gallienus. Volusianus' last position as military *tribunus* was thus not necessarily carried out in Rome.¹⁴⁷ Then, he became *praefectus vigilum*, at a point usually dated circa 258/259, and thus praetorian prefect in 260. Volusianus' rise to the top of the equestrian career had been extraordinarily rapid.¹⁴⁸ Whether Volusianus accompanied the emperor during the campaigns in the first years of his sole reign is unclear. As said above, he may have stayed in

¹⁴³ Though there is little evidence on the *centurio deputatus*, *CIL* 6.1110 (Roma) links this centurion to the centurions of the *Castra Peregrina*. See Dobson (1978), 306. The legion of which Volusianus was centurion is not mentioned.

¹⁴⁴ Dobson (1978), 308. According to Dobson, this position was carried under Philipus Arabs, circa 245.

¹⁴⁵ A former *tribunus* of the *Vigiles* usually commanded the *equites singulares*. According to Dobson (1978), 307, Volusianus must have been entrusted with this task temporarily. Dobson adds that whether the appointment was a sign of imperial favor or of a declining significance of these troops cannot be determined, since the circumstances surrounding the appointment are unknown and since there are no parallels for such an appointment.

¹⁴⁶ Volusianus was commander, *tribunus* or *praepositus*, of detachments of the legions *X et XIV Geminarum* and the Dacian legion in the Danubian area in the late 240s or 250s. See Pflaum (1960–1961), vol. 2, 901–905, no. 347; Devijver (1976–1990), vol. 2, 639–640, P 30; Dobson (1978), 307.

¹⁴⁷ *PLRE* I, Volusianus 6, follows Pflaum, (1960–1961), vol. 2, 901–905, no. 347, in dating the tribunates between 255 and 257. Dobson (1978), 308, however, suggests that Volusianus held these commands between 251 and 253, although he admits that these offices may also have been held between 253 and 261. Goltz-Hartmann (2008), 279, note 255, claim that Volusianus received the title *protector* circa 258. Speidel (2008), 687, note 90, assumes that Volusianus became *protector* in 260, under Gallienus and Saloninus.

¹⁴⁸ Cf. *PLRE* I, p. 981; Dobson (1978), 307, adds that Volusianus was not *primipilus iterum* and that he never served as *procurator* at all. According to Dobson, a rapid rise through equestrian posts was not unusual, if an emperor wanted someone in his entourage to stay put.

Rome to settle matters there and to deal with potential disturbances in the emperor's absence. It is likely that he continued to be a praetorian prefect until Gallienus left Italy to fight the Goths and Heruli late in the year 266. Then Volusianus became city prefect.

Besides Volusianus, several other *protectores* are known to us. An inscription from Aquincum (Pannonia Inferior) from 267 refers to a man named (Clementius) Valerius Marcellinus as *praefectus legionis II Adiutricis, protector (Augusti nostri)* and *agens vice legati*. Since another man is attested as *agens vice praesidis* of Pannonia Inferior in those days, Marcellinus was probably acting as *vice legati legionis*.¹⁴⁹ Marcellinus apparently survived Gallienus' death. Under Probus, from 277 to 280, he is attested as governor (*praeses*) of Mauretania Tingitana.¹⁵⁰

Marcellinus' appointment in Pannonia Inferior parallels that of a certain Publius Aelius Aelianus. Aelius Aelianus was born in Pannonia Inferior as the son of the former *custos armorum* of legion II *Adiutrix* and brought up in an army camp near Aquincum. Under Gallienus, he became *praefectus legionis II Adiutricis, protector*, and *agens vice legati* in Pannonia Inferior between 260 and 267.¹⁵¹ He may thus have been Marcellinus' immediate predecessor. This man is probably identical with the Aelius Aelianus mentioned as *praeses* of Mauretania Caesariensis in another inscription and may also be identical with the homonymous *procurator* of Epirus.¹⁵²

¹⁴⁹ *CIL* 3.3424 = *ILS* 545 (Aquincum, Pannonia Inferior). '... *Clementius Silvius v(ir) e(gregius) a(gens) v(ice) p(raesidis) et Val(erius) Marcellinus praef(ectus) leg(ionis), prot(ector) Aug(usti) n(ostri), a(gens) v(ice) l(egati) ...*'. On Valerius Marcellinus, see *PIR*² C 1143; *PLRE* I, Marcellinus 23; Johne-Hartmann-Gerhardt (2008), 1142, with further references. According to *PLRE*, I, Marcellinus was replaced by Aurelius Frontinus before June 268.

¹⁵⁰ See also, *AE* 1920, 44 = *IL Afr* 609; *AE* 1921, 23 = *IL Afr* 610; *AE* 1916, 92 = *IL Afr* 621; *CIL* 8.21846 (Mauretania Tingitana). De Blois (1976), 46, seems to be mistaken in calling Marcellinus governor of Mauretania Caesariensis.

¹⁵¹ *AE* 1965, 9 (Pannonia Inferior); *CIL* 3.3529 (Pannonia Inferior). On Aelius Aelianus, see also *PIR*² A 129; *PLRE* I, Aelianus 10 cf. Aelianus 7 and 8; Pflaum (1960–1961), vol. 2, 948–952, no. 357; Nagy (1965); Goltz-Hartmann (2008), 281, note 260, and Johne-Hartmann-Gerhardt (2008), 1140, with further references.

¹⁵² Aelius Aelianus as *praeses* of Mauretania Caesariensis: *CIL* 8, 21486 = *ILS* 4495 (Mauretania Caesariensis). Aelianus probably governed Mauretania before 277, when Valerius Marcellinus became Mauretania Tingitana's governor. It is noteworthy that the careers of these men are so comparable, as Dobson (1978), 312, has pointed out. Dobson suggests that Aelianus may have been *primipilaris*, although no source confirms this. Aelius Aelianus as *procurator* of Epirus: *AE* 1907, 70 = *AE* 1915, 74 = *ILS* 9478. The identification of the *praefectus legionis* with the man mentioned in this inscription was suggested in *PIR*² A 319, but was not accepted by Pflaum (1960–1961), vol. 2, 948–952,

A man named Marcus Aurelius Victor was *procurator* and *praeses* of Mauretania Caesariensis and *protector*. According to Christol, he was born in Mauretania and returned to the area shortly before the beginning of 263 as *procurator*, after reaching the rank of *primipilaris*. As *primuspilus* and *protector*, he accompanied the emperor Gallienus during his military service.¹⁵³ This Aurelius Victor has been linked to the Aurelius Victor mentioned in the inscription of the arch of Gallienus in Rome.¹⁵⁴

Another *protector* was Traianus Mucianus, whose career is known from an incomplete and heavily damaged inscription from Thracia.¹⁵⁵ Mucianus presumably started his career as a soldier in a mobile field army of Gallienus, accompanying the emperor during his campaign against the Goths in 267, after which he became cavalryman in the praetorian guard. The rest of his career suggests that he probably ended up in the corps of *evocati*.¹⁵⁶ Mucianus continued his career as centurion, first in legion *XIII Gemina*, subsequently in cohorts of the *Vigiles*, an urban cohort, and finally a praetorian cohort. In all cases, the title *protector* was added.¹⁵⁷ Next, he was *princeps protector/protectorum*, but it is unclear in which corps.¹⁵⁸ The last post which is legible in the inscription is *primuspilus* (or perhaps *primipilaris*). The legion concerned is not mentioned, nor is the additional title of *protector*.¹⁵⁹ Gallienus' praetorian prefect

no. 357. De Blois (1976), 46, points out that there was another Aelius Aelianus from Photike, who was later *v.e. ducenarius ex protectoribus*.

¹⁵³ AE 1920, 108; AE 1956, 128 (Mauretania Caesariensis). On Aurelius Victor, see *PIR*² A 1634; *PLRE* I, Victor 11; Thomasson (1996), 220–221, no. 47; Christol-Salama (2001).

¹⁵⁴ *CIL* 6.1106 = *ILS* 548 (Roma). Cf. De Blois (1976), 54; *PLRE* I, Victor 11.

¹⁵⁵ *IGBR* 3.2.1570 = AE 1977, 768 (Thracia); on this man's career, see also Christol (1977); Dobson (1978), 313–316, no. 223; Dobson and Breeze (1993).

¹⁵⁶ The *evocati* were the most competent soldiers of the garrison of Rome who could, after their military service, continue their careers in imperial service in several important positions. In some cases, they could even start a new career as *centurion*, followed by posts as *primipilus*, like this Mucianus. See Dobson and Breeze (1993).

¹⁵⁷ Christol (1977), 401, note 32 (with further references), mentions a suggestion by Pflaum that Mucianus never actually was *centurio vigilum* or *centurio (cohortis) urbanae*, since the inscription does not specify the cohorts. Christol adds that G. Alföldy describes this as 'eine sehr römische Praxis', especially in times of war.

¹⁵⁸ Domaszewski supplements *protectorum*. Babut, on the other hand, suggests *princeps protector*. See Dobson (1978), 314, for references. Cf. Christol (1977), 402–403.

¹⁵⁹ The end of Mucianus' career is inscrutable, because the text on the inscription is hardly legible and the Greek terminology is confusing. A reconstruction of the last part of the inscription has yielded the suggestion that Mucianus was *praefectus* or *dux* of (probably a *vexillatio* of) *legio IV Flavia*, and subsequently *praepositus*, probably of a field

Heraclianus, seems to have been Mucianus' *patronus*.¹⁶⁰ Perhaps Mucianus was appointed *centurio* due to Heraclianus' involvement, as Christol suggests.¹⁶¹

Based on Mucianus' career, Christol hypothesized that the honorary title *protector* was assigned to equestrian military cadre officers (*centuriones*, *primipili*, *tribuni* and *praefecti*) who belonged to the staff of Gallienus' mobile army and who found themselves in the emperor's entourage. Christol furthermore suggests that the title *protector* was comparable with the title of *comes*, but that it was used as an alternative term honoring men of lower social standing.¹⁶²

The End of Gallienus' Sole Reign: Goths, Heruli and Assassination
(267/268)

Table 4.9. Men involved in military events at the end of Gallienus' reign (267/268)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>
Aureolus	<i>Dux equitum</i> or <i>dux vexillationum</i> in Raetia/in Germanos?
Ceronius/Cecropius	<i>Dux (equitum) Dalmatarum</i>
Claudius (II Gothicus)	<i>Dux equitum</i> (or <i>tribunus</i> in Ticinum?)
Domitius Aurelianus	<i>Dux equitum</i>
Heraclianus	<i>Dux</i> against Vaballathus/Zenobia?? 267? <i>Praefectus praetorio</i> 267/268
Herennius Dexippus	General (<i>dux</i> ?) against Goths and Heruli in Athens 267/268
Marcianus	<i>Dux</i> against Goths 267/268

After a few relatively peaceful years in which Odaenathus defended the East and Gallienus could focus on the enemies on the northern and

army consisting of combined *vexillationes* of the legions *VII Claudia* and *IV Flavia*. See Dobson (1978), 315. Dobson says that these last two posts are usually rendered as *dux* and *praepositus* in Latin, but he stresses that these terms were used to describe several commands of various weight. Mucianus seems to have reached the rank of *ducenarius* and seems to have become *praefectus* (of a legion in Mesopotamia?). He is called *strategos*. Since his career after his position as *primipilaris* cannot be compared to any other *cursus* we know, it cannot be supplemented with any certainty, as Dobson (1978), 316, stresses. The term *strategos* does not correspond with the honorary title of *dux* (δοῦξα) that he gets in the first line of the inscription.

¹⁶⁰ In 267, Mucianus erected an inscription (*AE* 1948, 55 = *IGBR* 3.2.1569) dedicated to *praefectus praetorio* Aurelius Heraclianus.

¹⁶¹ Christol (1977), 399–401.

¹⁶² Christol (1977), 402–406.

western borders and the Gallic empire, the year 267 brought more trouble. At the end of that year, Odaenathus and his elder son were assassinated.¹⁶³ Odaenathus was succeeded by his son Vaballathus, who was assisted by his mother Zenobia. Although some late sources implicate Roman involvement, it is hard to see how Gallienus would have profited from Odaenathus' death, and Roman relations with Odaenathus' successors did not change drastically, which renders the suggestion unlikely. Late sources state that Odaenathus assumed imperial power or that he received a general command over the East. Palmyra, however, remained a Roman *colonia* and there is no real evidence for *secessio* in the 260s.¹⁶⁴ Vaballathus and Zenobia, however, changed their political course and became a threat to Roman authority.¹⁶⁵

According to the *Historia Augusta*, Gallienus sent Aurelius Heraclianus, who would later become praetorian prefect, as *dux* to settle the situation in the East after Odaenathus' death.¹⁶⁶ Heraclianus likely had a successful military career before this promotion, in which he took part in Gallienus' wars against barbarian invaders and internal usurpers. Unfortunately, there is no evidence on his early career. Heraclianus was supposed to replace Odaenathus and to take command of the military operations against the Persians. Apparently, however, defeated and his army destroyed by the Palmyrenes under Zenobia, Heraclianus then returned to the West without having achieved his aim. At his return in 267, Heraclianus probably succeeded Volusianus as *praefectus praetorio*.¹⁶⁷ No other ancient source refers to this expedition of Heraclianus, and con-

¹⁶³ *HA, Vita Gall.* 13, 1 blames a kinsman; *HA, Vita Trig. Tyr.* 15, 5–6, 17, 1–3 says a kinsman plotted with Zenobia; Zosimus 1, 39, 2; Syncellus 716–717 (Mosshammer (1984), pp. 466–467); and Zonaras 12, 24, simply refer to a plot, possibly familial. Roman involvement is hinted at by Continuator Dionis, Joh. Antioch., fr. 152, 2, *Excerpta de Insidiis* 110. On Odaenathus' death, see Hartmann (2008c), 356–357, with further references at note 37.

¹⁶⁴ Cf. Hekster (2008), 24, who admits that near-contemporary inscriptions call Odaenathus 'restorer of the whole east' or even 'king of kings', but adds that the evidence is posthumous. 'It seems that, though he was *de facto* ruler of the East, Odaenathus stressed his allegiance to Rome. Gallienus may have held little actual control in Palmyra and its wider surroundings, but Rome could still claim to be its emperor.' Cf. Millar (1993), 170–172. Hartmann (2008c), 357, however, assumes that Gallienus was behind the murder.

¹⁶⁵ On events in the East just after Odaenathus' death, see Hartmann (2008c), 358–360, with further references.

¹⁶⁶ On Heraclianus as *dux*, see *HA, Vita Gall.* 13, 4–5; 14, 1. On Heraclianus, see *PLRE I*, Heraclianus 6; Johne-Hartmann-Gerhardt (2008), 1073, with further references.

¹⁶⁷ According to Goltz-Hartmann (2008), 284, Heraclianus was already praetorian prefect when he was sent against Zenobia. They assume that Heraclianus' campaign in the East was prevented by Aureolus' desertion in 268.

sidering the reliability of the *Historia Augusta*, it should be taken into account that it never took place, or at least not during the reign of Gallienus.¹⁶⁸

In 267/268, Goths and Heruli ('Skythai') invaded the Balkans and seized parts of Moesia and Greece. They devastated large areas in both Thessaly and Greece, including the capture and plunder of most of Athens. As they also threatened the Italic peninsula, the precarious situation asked for Gallienus' immediate attention. Even before the emperor and his armies reached Greece, however, the Athenians themselves acted. The so-called Valerian Wall which surrounded only a small area north of the Acropolis, was created as a last line of defense.¹⁶⁹ Led by a general named Herennius Dexippus, the Athenians held off the barbarians.¹⁷⁰ Dexippus came from an important Athenian family and reached the Athenian archonship, although we perhaps know him best as a historian.¹⁷¹ Dexippus seems not to have held any Roman offices. Dexippus' family had obviously decided to focus on its status within the Athenian society and thus on their position as local *potentes*; they did not belong to the Roman senate.¹⁷² In the battle against the Goths and Heruli, Dexippus excelled as general; he encouraged the Athenian men to fight bravely and to hold on until the imperial fleet arrived. The emperor's fleet came and secured a victory.¹⁷³

Gallienus commissioned a man named Marcianus for his campaign against the Goths. An inscription from Thracia praises Marcianus for saving the city of Philippopolis, presumably from a Gothic attack, and refers to Marcianus as *δοῦξ καὶ στρατηλάτης*.¹⁷⁴ This information corresponds to references in the *Historia Augusta*, according to which Gallienus

¹⁶⁸ Potter (2004), 266, concludes that the expedition to the East did not take place during the reign of Gallienus, as Heraclianus must have been engaged in the Gothic war in 267, but he suggests that Heraclianus might have made an expedition to the East to restore Roman authority in 270 under Claudius II Gothicus.

¹⁶⁹ Millar (2004), 292–293.

¹⁷⁰ On Dexippus' defeat of the Goths and Heruli, see *HA*, Gall. 13, 8; Syncellus 717 (Mosshammer (1984), p. 467). On Dexippus, see also *PIR*² H 104; *PLRE* I, Dexippus 2; Goltz-Hartmann (2008), 287, note 275, with further references.

¹⁷¹ On him and his work, see, Millar (1969) and Martin (2006).

¹⁷² Cf. Millar (2004), 282–283.

¹⁷³ For an account of the battle, see Dexippus, *Scythica* F28 [F25], translated in Hekster (2008), 115–116.

¹⁷⁴ *AE* 1965, 114. On Marcianus, see *PIR*² M 204; *PLRE* I, Marcianus 2. Gerov (1965) suggests that the title *dux* refers to an earlier stage in Marcianus' career—'perhaps service in Pisidia earlier in the reign of Gallienus'. According to *PLRE* I, Marcianus 2, Marcianus' rank was probably *dux*, and *στρατηλάτης* will be interpretation.

mobilized Marcianus as *dux* in his campaign against the Goths in 267/268.¹⁷⁵ Marcianus' early career is not recorded, but must have been mainly military.¹⁷⁶ He apparently defeated the Goths in Achaia, perhaps in 267, after which he defeated them again in Illyricum, allegedly aided by Claudius. This future emperor's role in the war against the Goths, however, is dubious and probably aimed at clearing Claudius from any involvement in the conspiracy against Gallienus.¹⁷⁷ The Goths invaded Asia Minor, but Aureolus prevented any further intervention against them. After Gallienus had left for Italy to put down the revolt of Aureolus, Marcianus was left in control of the war against the Goths.¹⁷⁸

As has been mentioned above, there is no record of Volusianus' participation in Gallienus' campaign against the Goths and Heruli in 267/268. Volusianus was probably promoted to city prefect in Rome when Gallienus left the capital at the end of 266.¹⁷⁹ Heraclianus took Volusianus' place as praetorian prefect, probably after some successful activities as *dux*, and accompanied the emperor during the campaign in the Balkan area.

After Raetia had been recovered, Aureolus was stationed there with a mobile cavalry unit. From there, he was able to guard the borders of the Gallic empire, the Danube frontiers of the Empire against Germanic invaders, and the Alpine passes, so that Italy could not be invaded.¹⁸⁰ In the spring of 268, however, Aureolus turned against Gallienus. He withdrew from Raetia and went to Milan, more or less inviting Pos-

¹⁷⁵ *HA, Gall.* 6, 1; cf. 13, 10; Zosimus 1, 40.

¹⁷⁶ This claim is supported by Zosimus 1, 40, who calls Marcianus 'a person of great experience in military affairs.'

¹⁷⁷ *HA, Claud.* 6, 1; 18, 1. Claudius may have remained in the area somewhat longer than Gallienus, but he certainly was in Italy at the beginning of autumn 268, when Gallienus was killed. On the other hand, the reference to Claudius' intervention in this matter supports the assumption that he was a key figure in Illyricum in those days. On Claudius helping Marcianus, see also Goltz-Hartmann (2008), 290, with further references.

¹⁷⁸ The precise details on these invasions and the Roman response to it are almost impossible to reconstruct with any certainty as the sources are very confusing. See Potter (2004), 263, and 641–642, note 4, for further references on this matter. According to Gerove (1965), 344, Marcianus was governor of Moesia Inferior and Superior. Against this, see Thomasson (1972–1990), vol. 1, 146, no. 146; 175, no. 165. Cf. Johne-Hartmann-Gerhardt (2008), 1150; 1188, with further references. Marcianus may have been identical to the *praeses* of Dalmatia in 277, mentioned in *CIL* 3.8707. See Johne-Hartmann-Gerhardt (2008), 1120.

¹⁷⁹ Volusianus as city prefect in 267–268: Chronogr. a. 354; cf. Christol (1986), 130–131.

¹⁸⁰ Cf. Goltz-Halfmann (2008), 274–275.

tumus to invade Italy.¹⁸¹ Nevertheless, Postumus made no attempts in that direction. Perhaps the soldiers of the Rhine army were dissatisfied because of this lack of action. At the beginning of 269, a usurper named Laelianus, who was probably *legatus legionis XXII Primigeniae* or governor of Germania Superior, was proclaimed emperor in Moguntiacum (modern Mainz), though he was murdered by his own troops soon thereafter.¹⁸² Postumus was also killed by his own soldiers in May/June 269.¹⁸³ The Gallic empire still continued to exist until the summer of 274.

When Postumus did not respond to his invitation and support, Aureolus declared himself emperor at Milan. Two versions exist on Aureolus' exact function at the time he and Gallienus became alienated. Zosimus, followed by Zonaras, claims that Aureolus occupied Milan as commander of the entire cavalry.¹⁸⁴ Aurelius Victor, on the other hand, does not mention Aureolus' position as commanding officer of the cavalry and reports that Aureolus revolted as leader of the legions in Raetia ('*cum per Raetias legionibus praeesset*'), as *dux exercitus* rather than governor. According to Victor, Aureolus subsequently marched towards Italy, where Gallienus defeated him and forced him to withdraw to Milan.¹⁸⁵ In his article on the reform of the cavalry by Gallienus, Simon finds Aurelius Victor's version more reliable, although he adds that coins attest that Aureolus commanded at least a strong unit of cavalry. He suggests that

¹⁸¹ Aurelius Victor, *Liber de Caesaribus* 33, 17; Zosimus 1, 40, 1; Zonaras 12, 25. Aureolus issued coins from the mint of Milan in the name of Postumus, probably to elicit the support of the Rhine legions in his struggle against Gallienus. Postumus, however, does not seem to have responded to this, probably refusing to become involved in the venture. On this matter, see Alföldi (1967), 1–15; Drinkwater (1987), 31–33; Watson (1999), 41; Goltz-Hartmann (2008), 288, with further references.

¹⁸² On Ulpius Cornelius Laelianus, see Aurelius Victor, *Liber de Caesaribus* 33, 8; Eutropius 9, 9, 1. Cf. *HA, Vita Tyr. Trig.* 5 (calling him Lollianus); *Epitome de Caesaribus* 32, 4 (where he is called L. Aelianus) and Orosius 7, 22, 11 ('Aemilianus'). See also Kienast (1996), 244–245.

¹⁸³ *HA, Vita Trig. Tyr.* 3, 7; Aurelius Victor, *Liber de Caesaribus* 33, 9; Eutropius 9, 9.

¹⁸⁴ Zos. 1, 40, 1; Zonaras 12, 25.

¹⁸⁵ Aurelius Victor, *Liber de Caesaribus* 33, 17. Zonaras 12, 25, probably also knew this version of the story, since he said that Aureolus revolted while acting as a commander in German territory (ἐν Κελτοῖς στρατηγούτος). Perhaps Syncellus' remark (Syncellus 717, Mosshammer (1984), p. 467), that Aureolus was στρατηγός Κελτικός also reflects this version. On this, see Simon (1980), 438–439. De Blois (1976), 30–31, asserts that Aureolus was *dux* 'per Raetias', based on the words of Aurelius Victor, and he says 'the title could refer to instructions concerning the threat of an attack by the Alemanni on Raetia.' He adds (30, note 34) that 'in addition to the command of the cavalry Aureolus may well have had command of all the troops on the borders between Gallienus' territory and that of Postumus and the Alemanni, as well as of the legions on the Upper Danube.'

Aureolus' official Latin title may have been *dux omnium vexillationum*, perhaps with the additional words *in Raetia* or *in Germanos*.¹⁸⁶ Aureolus must have been one of the Empire's most powerful men during Gallienus' reign. Yet he seems to have been the first of Gallienus' generals who showed open dissatisfaction with the latter's regime.

While Gallienus was besieging Aureolus in Milan, he gathered his best men to participate in the battle against his former general. They, however, had other plans. According to several sources, it was the praetorian prefect Heraclianus who instigated the conspiracy against Gallienus.¹⁸⁷ He probably drew Claudius into the plot. Aurelius Victor reports that, at that time, Claudius was commanding the soldiers stationed at Ticinum, a city close to Milan, as *tribunus*. Zonaras calls him cavalry commander.¹⁸⁸ Another possible conspirator was Marcianus.¹⁸⁹ A man named Cecropius or Ceronius, commander of the Dalmatian cavalry (*dux Dalmatarum*), is mentioned as Gallienus' actual killer.¹⁹⁰ Two versions of the murder exist. According to the *Historia Augusta* and Zosimus, Gallienus was told at dinnertime that Aureolus was advancing. He rushed outside to gather his men, but was killed by the commander of the cavalry. Aurelius Victor and Zonaras report that Aureolus had arranged for a forged document in which Gallienus appeared to be plotting against his generals to fall into the hands of Gallienus' senior staff. In this version, Domitius Aurelianus leads the plot. Aurelianus, born during Caracalla's reign in Illyricum, was of humble origins and had a military career which is largely unknown to us.¹⁹¹ During the reign of Gallienus, Aurelianus seems to have been cav-

¹⁸⁶ Simon (1980), 439–443. At p. 441, Simon adduces mention of Claudius, Aurelianus and Cecropius/Ceronius as leaders of the cavalry as a further demonstration that there was no such thing as one, united cavalry led by one man under Gallienus. Simon furthermore suggests (p. 443) that the Hellenophone authors were probably confused since from the fourth century onward a *vexillatio* was usually a cavalry unit, whereas the term could refer to a special unit of any kind of troops during the Principate.

¹⁸⁷ On Heraclianus' role in the conspiracy: *HA, Vita Gall.* 14.; Zosimus 1, 40, 2–3.

¹⁸⁸ Zosimus 1, 40, 2, posits Claudius' involvement. *HA, Vita Gall.* 14, 1–9; 15, 2, explicitly exculpates Claudius. Claudius as *tribunus*: Aurelius Victor, *Liber de Caesaribus*, 33, 28; as cavalry commander: Zonaras 12, 26.

¹⁸⁹ *HA, Vita Gall.* 14, 1, 7; however, Zosimus 1, 40, does not name Marcianus as one of the persons involved.

¹⁹⁰ *HA, Vita Gall.* 14, 4–9. Zosimus 1, 40, 2–3, does not give his name, but describes him as commander of a squadron of Dalmatian cavalry. According to Zonaras 12, 24, Heraclianus was the murderer of Gallienus. *PLRE I*, Cecropius I, suggests that Cecropius/Ceronius may have been *tribunus* rather than *dux*, but this is not explained. Another *dux* called Cecropius is mentioned in *HA, Vita Prob.* 22, 3, as one of the illustrious generals who was trained by Probus, but he may have been fictitious. Cf. *PLRE I*, Cecropius 2.

¹⁹¹ He was born in 214/215 in either Dacia Ripensis or Sirmium. Aurelianus' father

alry commander (*dux equitum*). Although it is generally assumed that Aurelianus joined the conspiracy against Gallienus, his exact role cannot be determined.¹⁹² Aurelianus certainly supported the new emperor Claudius II Gothicus, who eventually promoted him to supreme commander of the whole cavalry of the Roman army and whom Aurelianus even succeeded in the end.¹⁹³

The Aftermath

After Gallienus had been killed, Marcus Aurelius Claudius (Claudius II Gothicus) succeeded him. Claudius dealt with Aureolus, who surrendered and was killed.¹⁹⁴ Marcianus allegedly pacified the rebelling troops by bribing them.¹⁹⁵ Nothing more is heard of Cecropius/Ceronius, but he probably was at least relieved of his post by Claudius and perhaps even executed. Heraclianus committed suicide.¹⁹⁶ The fate of Volusianus, Gallienus' loyal city prefect, is unknown, but he probably perished not long after the emperor. Claudius ruled the Empire for about two years and was, after a short intermezzo, succeeded by Aurelianus.

allegedly was a *colonus* (tenant) of a senator named Aurelius, but this may have been invention. *HA, Vita Aurel.* 3, 1–2; *Epitome de Caesaribus* 35, 1; Eutropius 9, 13, 1. See Kienast (1996), 234, for further references. The details of his early career as given in *HA, Vita Aureliani* are probably fictitious. On this matter, see *PLRE I*, Aurelianus 6; Watson (1999), 1.

¹⁹² Zonaras 12, 24; Aurelius Victor, *Liber de Caesaribus* 33, 21, claim that Aurelianus forged the plot. *HA, Vita Aurel.* 16, 1; Eutropius 9, 11, 1; and Zosimus 1, 40, 1–3, however, do not mention Aurelianus in connection with the conspiracy against Gallienus. On this matter, see Bleckmann (1992), 417; Paschoud (1996), 110. Cf. Goltz-Hartmann (2008), 289–292, esp. 291, note 288, with further references.

¹⁹³ Aurelianus as supreme commander of the cavalry: *HA, Vita Aurel.* 18, 1. According to Watson (1999), 42, Aurelianus was immediately assigned Cecropius' former command over the Dalmatian cavalry, and in due course promoted to the position of overall commander of the cavalry, vacated by Claudius himself. 'It may be that Aurelianus' complicity in the plot to kill Gallienus was not as incriminating as that of the other two (i.e. Cecropius and Heraclianus), or it may simply be that Claudius knew he could trust Aurelianus. In either case, it suggests that Claudius had need of Aurelianus, whose popular standing with the army helped to smooth the transition of power.' Aurelianus' proclamation: *HA, Vita Aurel.* 37, 6; Zosimus 1, 47.

¹⁹⁴ On Aureolus: Zosimus 1, 41. On Claudius' proclamation, see also *HA, Vita Gall.* 15, 3; *Claud.* 4; Aurelius Victor, *Liber de Caesaribus* 34, 1; Eutropius 9, 11, 1; Zosimus 1, 41; Zonaras 12, 26.

¹⁹⁵ *HA, Vita Gall.* 15, 2.

¹⁹⁶ Zonaras 12, 25. Heraclianus was probably discarded by Claudius, the new emperor. Or, if Potter's suggestion (Potter, 2004, 266) that Heraclianus was sent on expedition in the east by Claudius and failed to restore Roman authority there is correct, he might have committed suicide after this failure.

Concluding Observations

This examination of the men involved in military crises under Gallienus has yielded the following observations regarding power and status in the third-century Roman imperial administrative hierarchies. By 260, imperial authority was highly unstable. Valerianus and Gallienus' joint reign was afflicted by omnipresent incursions of hostile tribes, bringing about discontent among the armies and their leaders. Valerianus' capture must have devastated what was left of the confidence in imperial authority. It presumably was the immediate cause for a number of revolts against Gallienus, which diminished the level of power he exercised. As the emperor faced so many military problems at once in various parts of the Empire, he was highly dependent on his high-ranking military officers to assist him in solving these crises.

Senators' roles in military events seem to have been marginal by the 260s. Although it remains possible that men like Ingenuus, Regalianus and Postumus were senators, the scarcity of information on their social standing is significant. If they were senators, their revolts may have contributed to, or accelerated, the exclusion of senators from military commands. Yet senators' absence at the top of the military hierarchy had obviously started well before in the 240s. Piso and Valens are clearly labeled as senatorial men, but their offices were too unclear and their very existence is doubtful, as no epigraphic attestation confirms the literary sources, so that basing conclusions merely on their cases is thus risky. Only Odaenathus certainly was granted senatorial status. For him senatorial status may have been indispensable, as he combined both military and civil powers in the East, and hence required authority over not only military officers, but also local elites and vassal kings, who may have attached much value to senatorial rank. *Equites*, however, seem to have exercised more influence in military crises during Gallienus' sole reign, men who had gained relevant military experience and connections with the military middle cadre officers, and who had large numbers of troops and/or supplies at their disposal, many of whom allegedly originated from the Illyrian area.

By the 260s, the military system had become much more flexible. The frontier zones were guarded by long-standing, organized field armies, drawn from the legions and put under the command of generals (*duces*). Although for most of these men all we have is non-contemporary, literary evidence, which is often confusing and rarely specifies their exact position, the evidence indicates, first, that each of them commanded a

number of detachments assembled from rearrangements of legions, and, second, that they received these commissions in areas that were threatened continuously by barbarian invasions, like Illyricum and Gallia. In such areas, these high-ranking officers either replaced the governors, or at least assumed the governors' military responsibilities. Since structural military emergencies were inflicting the Empire in those days, this system became more or less permanent. This system, however, depended greatly on commanders' acceptance of imperial authority, as attempts by several of these *duces* to seize imperial power proved. Yet, as their power was primarily based on regional connections and support of the armies under their command, their claim for power often received acceptance only at the local level.

To fight these usurpers and to solve other temporary local crises, Gallienus mobilized field armies under the command of troubleshooting generals, such as Aureolus, who are often called *dux equitum*, cavalry commander, in the literary sources. These generals certainly seem to have commanded mobile detachments, since they show up in geographically disparate areas of the Empire successively to solve crises. Yet it would be rather strange if they only had cavalry units at their disposal. Although the importance of the cavalry had risen steadily from mid-second century onward, infantry remained a relevant military instrument as well. It may be true, however, that a large cavalry corps was the core of Gallienus' mobile field armies.¹⁹⁷ We should note that we are perhaps dealing with an anachronism here, since *vexillatio*, which originally meant 'detachment of one or several legions', came to mean 'cavalry unit' in Late Antiquity.¹⁹⁸ Hence, these troubleshooting generals may have been *duces vexillationum*, a title by which late Roman and Byzantine authors eventually designated cavalry commanders. Gallienus' mobile detachments probably foreshadowed the rise of *comitatenses* in the Late Roman Empire.

The increasing importance of the professional staff of high-ranking officers and subaltern officers appears from the special corps of *protectores*, which developed in the mid-third century. Commanders of army corps and *vexillationes* were appointed from this group. By giving

¹⁹⁷ Cf. Strobel (2007), 276, who regards the cavalry under Gallienus as an elite corps, based on the role cavalry commanders and the *equites Dalmatae* played in Gallienus' murder.

¹⁹⁸ According to Strobel (2007), 268, the term *vexillatio* was already used in AD 293 to denote cavalry units as opposed to the infantry legion.

professional officers the title *protector*, Gallienus tightened the bonds between himself and these officers. The (equestrian) *protectores* may have largely replaced the (senatorial) *comites* as military advisers. If the title *protector* was indeed most commonly used for officers in the emperor's entourage, emperors may have granted this honorary title to their staff as a direct appeal for loyalty.

Gallienus also depended on what we may refer to as local strongmen. On the one hand, these were local men who took their own initiatives in defending an area which belonged to the Roman Empire. Whereas Dexippus' action in Athens was a once-only occurrence, Odaenathus' assistance in the East became more structural. On the other hand, Gallienus tried to overcome his problems in border areas by making treaties with local kings and leaders from outside the Empire, allowing them to settle on Roman territory while outsourcing the defense of parts of the frontier regions to them.

To conclude, senators' level of military power under Gallienus was low. They had lost their position to *equites*, as by then they lacked military experience and did not have the appropriate connections. Connections with other senators and members of the senatorial elite were no longer relevant; relations with the equestrian military middle cadre were. While the power of the *equites* as a whole grew, individuals' power remained restricted, as the emperor divided military responsibilities among a large number of men, who each received a small concentration of power over detachments of legions in the Empire's periphery. Even the *duces* of the more flexible, mobile field armies remained unable to challenge the emperors' power for long. When all of them assembled in Milan, they were able to link up and actually threaten imperial power. Ironically, Gallienus' sole reign thus ended where it had begun, in Milan, where men from the periphery who had assembled in the center of the Empire killed the emperor.

4.3. Conclusion

Now that we have both defined the military set under Severus and Gallienus and discussed how each emperor dealt with them, it is time to make up a balance. How do these cases compare? Which developments can be drawn and how can these be accounted for?

Acting or Reacting: Changing Times, Changing Attitudes

First of all, we need to take into account that the reigns of Septimius Severus and Gallienus differed fundamentally in the proportion of the reign that was taken up by military conflicts and, consequently, in the role played by military officers during these reigns. Whereas Severus confronted military conflicts only at the beginning and the end of his reign, Gallienus' rule was continuously afflicted by military incidents. Gallienus' sole reign may have experienced relative peace between 262 and 267, but no phase of absolute peace as Severus had experienced between 198 and 208. Consequently, Severus did not depend so completely on his military officers during his entire reign. Also reducing Severus' dependence on his military officers were the temporally successive and geographically confined nature of his military engagements, whereas Gallienus dealt with simultaneous and geographically disconnected threats. Finally, perhaps the most crucial difference was that most of Severus' external conflicts, the emperor had initiated himself: although the expedition against the Parthian vassal kings and the campaign in Britannia were responses to previous events in those areas, intervention was not inevitable in either, since the frontier areas of the Empire had not, or at least not yet, been invaded. By the time Gallienus was sole ruler, the emperor was no longer initiating military conflicts; he could only react to the events which others initiated. That is why Gallienus had to depend on his military officers throughout his entire sole reign, much more than Severus had. Both Gallienus' officers and the inhabitants of the Empire must have realized this, and it is clear that their expectation that the emperor would solve every situation decreased. So did their loyalty to imperial authority.

The Social Rank of the Military Officers

A second distinction between the situation at the end of the second century and the situation in the 260s relates to the social rank of high-ranking military officers. The military officers under Severus can be roughly divided into four groups. First are senatorial *viri consulares*, who governed imperial provinces as *legati Augusti pro praetore* and in that capacity held the supreme command over the legions stationed in their provinces. Governors of provinces with two or three legions would have many troops at their disposal and, consequently, possessed considerable military power. This situation could pose an immediate threat to imperial authority, as it provided senators with the means (money and

troops) to seize imperial power. The second group consisted of generals, who were commissioned by the emperor as troubleshooters in times of military crises. They were assigned to special army detachments drawn from the legions for a particular military expedition. If successful, a general and his field army could be mobilized in other campaigns as well. Many of Severus' generals were of senatorial rank, a mix of born senators and *homines novi*. A third group consisted of senators who were deployed as advisers (*comites*) and served in the imperial entourage during campaigns. Even if these senators had little or no military experience, they could nonetheless contribute valuably to the campaign. Their wealth, status and influence (particularly in Rome) and of course their connections with other senators helped Severus strengthen his position, which the emperor obviously considered necessary at the beginning of his career. To the fourth group belonged lower commanders, primarily of equestrian status, subordinated to the senatorial generals (*duces*).

A prosopographical examination of the military officers in the 260s makes clear that the role of senators in military affairs had by then heavily decreased. It is quite obvious that under Gallienus, the old system, in which provincial governors had held ultimate military commands unless a military crisis demanded drastic interference of a *dux* with a special task, could no longer be preserved: structural military problems in several border areas required more permanent solutions. Some areas, such as Illyricum, were almost continuously guarded by army detachments led by generals, who should not be—but often are—confused with provincial governors. Moreover, to fight usurpers and solve other temporary local crises Gallienus mobilized field armies under the command of troubleshooting generals, who are often referred to as *dux equitum*. Gallienus' generals seem mostly to have been men who had emerged from the military cadre, with substantial military experience and connections and who had reached equestrian rank. The role of senators as imperial advisers during campaigns seems to have become minimal as well. Useful connections no longer compensated for senators' lack of military experience, so the emperor no longer needed to take them along during expeditions. As they were no longer useful and could perhaps even burden the army amid harsh campaigns, their place was probably largely taken by *equites* who combined military expertise with useful connections within the armies and familiarity with the war zones. Since most men attested as *protectores* belonged to this group, the suggestion that *protectores* largely replaced the *comites* as military advisers is plausible.

Consequently, while military capability became ever more relevant because of the increasing number of military threats, senatorial status was no longer a goal for military officers. The practice of elevating successful *equites* to senatorial rank, to appoint them subsequently to senatorial posts, was no longer common by the 260s. So by the sole reign of Gallienus equestrian officers were no longer included in the senatorial class and senators were no longer officers. As a consequence, senatorial support seems to have become less urgent for the emperor. Thus, in areas dominated by warfare, military power and senatorial status drifted further and further apart.

Strategies to Secure Imperial Power

Yet besides these circumstances and their uncontrollable consequences, both Severus and Gallienus made strategic arrangements in an attempt to prevent the military from becoming too great a threat to imperial power.

Severus created good relations with the soldiers by giving them donatives, increasing their pay by half and by giving them other benefits, like allowing them to marry while in service. The praetorians were dismissed and a new guard, twice as large, was created out of provincial soldiers, mostly from the Danubian legions that had supported the emperor from the start. The urban cohorts and the *Vigiles* in Rome were increased too, while three new legions were raised, two of which were sent to the eastern border regions, the third being based in central Italy. All his military reforms were expensive, but they must have increased the soldiers' loyalty towards the Severan dynasty.¹⁹⁹ Moreover, Severus used every chance to involve his entire family in the army: Iulia Domna was granted the title *mater castrorum*, and Caracalla and Geta were actively involved in the campaign in Britannia.²⁰⁰ Severus' reliance upon the military is best reflected in the advice he is said to have given his sons in his famous last words: 'Be harmonious, enrich the soldiers, and scorn all other men.'²⁰¹

¹⁹⁹ On the donatives and soldiers' new privileges, see Herodianus 2, 11, 1; 2, 14, 5; 3, 6, 8; 3, 8, 4–5; *HA, Vita Sev.* 5, 2; 7, 6–7; 12, 2; 16, 5–9. On the army's pay raises, see Develin (1971); Speidel (1992); Alston (1994), 114–115; 118. On soldiers' right to marry, see Pfang (2001). On Severus' measures generally, see also Birley (1988), 102–103, with further references. Severus' military successes were celebrated on his arch in the Forum Romanum.

²⁰⁰ On Iulia Domna as *mater castrorum*, see Birley (1988), 115–117, with further references.

²⁰¹ Dio 77, 15, 2: 'ὁμονοεῖτε, τοὺς στρατιώτας πλουτίζετε, τῶν ἄλλων πάντων καταφρονεῖτε.'

Severus' behavior toward high-ranking military officers, however, was equivocal. Although he sought senatorial support at the beginning of his career, Severus does not seem to have trusted his senatorial generals entirely, as he continually avoided appointing them to positions of great military power. Especially those born into the senatorial order were only sporadically sent to lead in military events and then transferred to positions of a more civil-administrative nature. In that way, Severus made sure that those men whose status gave them easy access to money and senatorial support were not given too many troops. *Homines novi* were put into action more often, but after the civil and Parthian wars had ended, most of them disappear from view, temporarily or permanently. None of them received high military commands in times of war again, not even for Severus' campaign in Britannia.

By the time Gallienus became sole emperor, it was quite obvious that the men who could undermine the emperor's position were no longer primarily senators. By then, senators were only rarely appointed to offices which provided them with the military power necessary to prepare a coup. Instead, from the late 230s onward, these posts went into the hands mostly of equestrian men, many of whom came from the military middle cadre. These equestrian generals had at their disposal the means that senatorial consular governors had had at the beginning of the third century: troops and relevant connections. The case of Laetus demonstrates that Severus had also considered generals who gained too much popularity among their troops as threats to his power. Unlike Gallienus, however, Severus was able to dispose of this general when he reached a point in his reign where he no longer depended on his military officers. Gallienus' reign never saw such a peaceful period, and Gallienus' generals must have been aware of their powerful position. The events in 260–262 demonstrate that by then even men of lower social standing could threaten imperial authority. Gallienus took multiple measures in an attempt to prevent the military from becoming too great a threat: he strengthened the ties between his officers and himself, he reduced his officers' power and he enlarged his own control over military affairs. Furthermore, he realized that he needed a more flexible military defense system to accomplish these goals, and to cope concurrently with the problems afflicting various quarters of the Empire during his reign.

A considerable number of *duces* emerged under Gallienus. They commanded either long-standing field armies in frontier zones or more flexible, mobile detachments. A large cavalry corps seems to have formed

the core of these army units.²⁰² Nowadays it is debated whether Gallienus actually composed an entirely new mobile field army consisting of (mainly) cavalrymen, but it is clear that a more flexible system with a higher proportion of mobile army units that was applied for specific purposes, had come into use by the 260s. These mobile army units were necessary for actions in various areas of the Empire with the most suitable troops.

By dividing military responsibilities among a larger number of generals, each with a particular task or region, who were all directly accountable to the emperor, the ruler could supervise them more strictly than before. Further promoting his control was the emperor's more active personal participation in military affairs, which had developed between the beginning of the century and mid-third century. Whereas Severus had restricted his role in his expeditions, Gallienus dealt with many military crisis situations himself, as Valerianus had done in the East.

A special corps for the professional higher staff of officers and subaltern officers had emerged mid-third century: the *protectores*. Commanders of army corps and *vexillationes* were appointed out of this corps. By granting professional officers the title *protector*, Gallienus tightened the bonds between himself and this officers further. If the title *protector* was indeed most commonly used for officers in the emperor's entourage, it may be considered a direct appeal for loyalty expressed by the emperor, addressed to his general staff.

Besides these measures, Gallienus also depended on what we may call local strongmen, both Romans who took their own initiative and non-Roman local kings, who were allowed to settle on Roman territory as long as they defended the border regions against other tribes. The latter practice in itself was not new: previous emperors had made peace agreements with vassal kings. Parthian kings, for instance, had backed Niger in his battle for the throne and incurred punishment for this from Severus. Only the proliferation and extent of these treaties were new. According to some scholars, these barbarians were even deployed as mobile elite forces.

With all these measures, Gallienus tried to overcome the numerous problems he faced, and even though his reign was far from peaceful, he managed to reign for fifteen years. Hence, it is reasonable to

²⁰² Strobel (2007), 276, regards the cavalry under Gallienus as an elite corps, based on the role cavalry commanders and the *equites Dalmatiae* played in the murder of Gallienus.

conclude that his measures, or at least some of them, succeeded, which also appears from the fact that Diocletian adopted several of them in his reforms.

In conclusion, a comparison of the high-ranking military officers under Severus and Gallienus not only illustrates the increasing chaos in the third century, which is reflected in the available sources; it also reveals two main developments which were detected throughout the previous chapters: (1) the rise of *equites* as leading men in military crises, and (2) a widening gulf between military power and senatorial status in the military context. These developments are represented in the careers of a number of individuals involved in military events between the reigns of Severus and Gallienus, who have been discussed regularly throughout this study, for example Macrinus, Oclatinus Adventus, Timesitheus, Maximinus Thrax and Priscus. Whether there actually was an official edict or not, Gallienus seems to have confirmed a situation which had gradually become the *status quo*: senators were excluded from military commands. These measures probably did not come as a shock to the senators whose reluctance to pursue dangerous duties in the army must have increased in those unsettled times. The division between civil and military careers, which had started under Marcus Aurelius, had become entrenched under Gallienus. It was only a fairly small step for Diocletian to institutionalize this division.

CONCLUSION

History-writing is made out of all kinds of components, but information about individual persons remains among the most important. A history without persons would not be history at all.¹

This study has aimed to define changing power and status relations between the highest ranking representatives of Roman imperial power at the central level, particularly in a period when the central level came under tremendous pressure, AD 193–284. Prosopography has been used as the principal method for analyzing the Empire's administration, appointment policies and socio-political hierarchies. Hereby, it was possible to trace the political elite of the Empire, consisting of the third-century emperors, the senatorial elite and high-ranking equestrians who served as senior military officers in the army and as senior civil administrators. The examination of these groups, via their status profiles and four power aspects (in Dahl's terms, base, scope, domain and amount), has shown how the various power and status structures changed in different ways. By integrating prosopographical explorations into an analytical approach and asking sociological questions, this study does not aim to analyze each individual senator or *eques*, but more broadly surveys changes in power and status at the top level in the Roman Empire in the third century. The focus on the third century has been valuable because the difficulties of the era at different levels have revealed changes in power and status relations more visibly. The period under discussion is one for which data are minimal. Yet, exactly such a sociological analysis of power and status relations through prosopography has enabled me to describe and contextualize broader processes.

Finally, this study has aimed to demonstrate the advantages of a methodology based on an analysis and comparison of prosopographical data

¹ Cameron (2003), xiii.

covering a considerable part of the political elite for a period of about a century. This method yielded not only confirmation of various notions put forward in previous studies but, more importantly, new insights on the diachronic development of imperial administration and social hierarchies, and other aspects which remained obscure in previous studies of specific reigns, spheres of authority or geographic areas only.

This conclusion synthesizes the material of the previous chapters in the broader context of the functioning of third-century imperial administration at the central level. Throughout this study three themes emerge: a shift of priority from center to periphery, a gradual disappearance of the coincidence of status and power, and implicit changes in the administrative system. In the following sections these themes are discussed in the context of their importance for this study.

A Shift from Center to Periphery

Looking at developments of power and status relations in the third century as a whole, one can argue that a shift of priority from center to periphery, which manifested itself at several levels between AD 193 and 284, seriously disturbed existing power balances.

Emperorship was no longer reserved for men of the *ordo senatorius* with a network of friends and clients in Rome and preferably some level of military experience: in the course of the third century the imperial throne was mounted by several men who were *equites* at the time of their acclamation. As the number of military threats and their intensity increased, from the 230s onward, military preponderance became ever more important as a power base for emperors. Concurrently, emperors' military duties became increasingly urgent and time-consuming. As emperors were forced to focus on solving military crises in the periphery of the Empire, their presence in the Empire's center decreased. Hereby, the composition of the imperial entourage gradually changed: intellectuals and elite, both senators and equestrians, who were more or less Rome-based and who had not gained considerable military experience, gave way to specialists in military tactics, logistics, taxation and requisition. These high-ranking military specialists could also promote the careers of the military cadre personnel that helped them in their work. In that way, military men operating in border regions found the opportunity to intervene in central imperial administration on a far more structural basis than before the 230s. Consequently, their support became more urgent

for the emperors than the support of the traditional aristocracy, and they finally came to dominate imperial administration. Eventually, from the 260s onward, emperorship fell into the hands of such military men, who were born in the periphery of the Empire and had risen from soldier ranks to equestrian rank.

With the continuous elevation of equestrian high-ranking military officers to the imperial throne, the distinction between emperors and their generals became minimized. Consequently, military officers became ever more fearsome rivals to the emperors. A comparison of the situation under Septimius Severus and Gallienus has clearly shown how the accumulation of these developments seriously affected relations between emperors and their senior officers. Moreover, communication between emperor and senate grew increasingly complicated, not only because the emperors were present in Rome less frequently, but also because the status profile of the 'equestrian' emperors did not match the senatorial profile, and because these emperors were not familiar with senatorial modes of communication. While dynastic stability was lost as an additional power base, as the emperors after the Severi failed to establish long-lasting dynasties, emperors' capacity to legitimize their power became increasingly complicated. The fragility of imperial authority is demonstrated by the high number of men who took the initiative to claim imperial power for themselves, especially from the 240s onward.

*The Gradual Disappearance of the
Coincidence of Status and Power*

It is undeniable that in the period under scrutiny high social status no longer inevitably coincided with the ability to exercise power in the Roman Empire. In areas dominated by warfare, military power and senatorial status drifted further and further apart. As a result of the detachment of the exercise of power from the center of the Empire, membership in the senate seems to have grown less desirable to the new group of (military) power-holders who gradually became dominant.

Although this affected at least some senators' positions, it did not cause the complete social transformation which is often suggested for the third century. In fact, this change of mentality was obviously not unfavorable to a number of families within the senatorial elite, collectively constituting a senatorial nucleus. They did not have to relinquish their power and status in the center of the Empire by acting in geographical regions

not heavily struck by long-term problems and with a traditionally high status, such as Italy, Africa and Asia; areas in which ascribed status was still more relevant than achieved status. From the 240s onward, appointments of members of the senatorial nucleus in provinces guarded by legions became very rare. The scope of the senatorial elite's power was increasingly restricted to civil-administrative, legal and financial offices. The level of power they exercised in the areas assigned to them, however, should not be underestimated: that the emperors sojourned in Rome and other relatively peaceful areas less frequently than before, enabled this group to strengthen its position and exercise a considerable amount of influence there.

The senatorial nucleus constituted a small group which was strongly bound to Rome, Italy and each other; families obviously strove for continuity of their standing by entering into strategic alliances with other senatorial elite families. Possibilities to penetrate this senatorial core group or even to become a member of the senatorial elite were restricted and do not seem to have been eased by the increasing prospects for social mobility that emerged from the second century onward. Prestigious senatorial top positions thus remained in the hands of (a nucleus of) the senatorial elite, as ever before, and were not (permanently) transferred to *equites*. By continually appointing such senators at these positions, emperors maintained the honor due to them without giving them too much actual (military) power.

The power of the equestrian intellectuals—sophists and jurists—was primarily based on their education and scholarly reputation which resulted from their high status at urban and provincial levels. In the Severan era such intellectuals were still regularly appointed as imperial secretaries, fulfilling civil-administrative, legal and financial duties; military matters only occupied them if they were appointed to the praetorian prefecture. In this respect, their role within imperial administration paralleled that of the senatorial elite. However, whereas the senatorial elite may have profited from the emperor's increasing absence from the center of the Empire, equestrian intellectuals' power depended greatly on the emperor's vicinity and his concern with non-military matters. Consequently, from the 230s, when the emperors were forced to focus increasing attention on military crises in border regions, active involvement of this group of equestrians in imperial administration seems to have been drastically reduced. Yet, behind the scenes, away from public scrutiny, they may still have played a role in politics. Here, however, we face the limits of our source material.

From the reign of Septimius Severus onward, equestrians were ever more deployed as provincial governors and military commanders. As many of these positions went to ranking soldiers who had eventually acquired equestrian status, this group, which had only constituted a minority within the *ordo equester* in the first and most of the second centuries AD, eventually became dominant within the order in the course of the third century. The rise of these men was more fundamental for the changes in the third-century socio-political hierarchies than the rise of the intellectuals had been, as this time *equites* rose at the expense of senators.

The status of the praetorian prefect, the highest-ranking equestrian, eventually equaled his high level of power, when praetorian prefects could be granted senatorial rank and titulature, and could even enter the senate as consuls while remaining in office. Such an upgrade in status occasionally occurred from the 260s onward. Consequently, such praetorian prefects may have approached, but never equaled, the status of the senatorial elite whose members by then seem to have dominated Italy as *curatores* and *correctores*. The military professionals who came to dominate the *ordo equester* seem to have experienced a comparable elevation in status: over the course of the third century the title *vir perfectissimus* became more prevalent. The occurrence of equestrian emperors, status elevation within the equestrian order, examples of men who played essential roles within imperial administration but were not elevated to senatorial rank, such as Timesitheus and Priscus, or men for whom referring to their senatorial status does not seem to have had priority, such as Licinius Rufinus, may indicate a certain depreciation of senatorial status, at least in the military sphere. Yet it should be noted that the increase of status within the equestrian order was not ubiquitous: individual equestrians saw their level of status rise, but not all members of the *ordo* evidently rose in status. Likewise, as has become clear, senatorial status did not entirely lose its significance either.

Implicit Changes in the Administrative System

Whereas the developments in imperial administration discussed so far were quite obvious, a number of changes were incorporated in the administrative system more implicitly.

As emperors' military obligations became increasingly urgent and time-consuming, the scope of their power narrowed: tasks which had

formerly been reserved for emperors increasingly fell into the hands of others. At best, the emperor himself delegated imperial tasks to men acting *vice Caesaris*, such as senators who acted as judges in the emperor's place or praetorian prefects, who seemingly were increasingly deployed acting *vice Caesaris* both in the military and the non-military spheres, in areas where imperial presence was needed, but could not be realized. In some cases, however, imperial tasks seem to have been assumed by others without the emperor's involvement. A low point in this process was reached with the secession of the Gallic empire and Palmyra, when the emperors were forced to give up parts of the Empire, which negatively affected the domain of their power, as the number of people subject to their power decreased.

Furthermore, equestrian military professionals were ever more deployed as provincial governors and military commanders at the expense of senators. This extension of equestrian power, however, was often disguised as a provisional regulation as well: many equestrians were appointed as *agens vice*, supposedly replacing senators temporarily. Only after some generations had passed, *agentes vice praesidis* eventually became *praesides*. That these appointments were initially presented as interim solutions may have allowed the upgrading of such equestrians' status to start much later than this custom of appointing equestrians to positions which were previously reserved for senators.

As has been defined in the Introduction of this study, power is the capacity to make a difference. Although the senatorial elite did not become entirely powerless, the rise of the militarily-skilled *equites* in the course of the third century, many of whom had risen from soldier ranks, will have been a source of concern for members of the traditional aristocracy. They must have regarded such men, who in their eyes lacked the appropriate *paideia*, the distinguishing 'cultural capital' of the senatorial elite, as socially inferior. Unlike the group of equestrian intellectuals, who were educated and had a relatively high status at the local level and, most importantly, whose rise had not been at the expense of senators, the military *equites* must have been held in contempt by the senatorial elite members. On the other hand, even those senators must have realized the necessity of a strong *militia* in those days. Still, communication with emperors who came from this group of *equites* was highly complicated: they were often untraceable for the senators, and even if they were, they were less familiar with the senatorial way of communicating than their predecessors had been. Lukes' power dimension of preference-shaping,

leading to acceptance, will thus have been imperative for the late third-century emperors. Not only towards the senatorial elite, but also towards their own senior military officers, who, at the end of the period under scrutiny, were basically on a par with the men who became emperors.

In the end, however, status seems to have been more enduring than power. While an extension of (aspects of) power eventually resulted in an increase of status, a decrease of certain aspects of power did not immediately lead to status' loss, as the situation of the senatorial nucleus in the third century has demonstrated. Yet, all these developments inevitably caused tension between the various representatives of Roman imperial power at the central level.

Unsurprisingly, this tension in power and status relations eventually sparked the notorious conflict of AD 238 between the senatorial elite and the rising members of the *ordo equester*, including the emperor Maximinus Thrax. What is more astounding is that there is no report of confrontations between senators and *equites* in the second half of the period under discussion. The clash in 238, however, did not prevent the informal separation of military and civilian duties, which had started under Septimius Severus and accelerated from the 230s onward. The process resulted in the exclusion of senators from military commands under Gallienus and, ultimately, a formal division under Diocletian. The conflict of 238 resulted in a compromise between the wishes of the soldiers and those of the senate, when Gordianus III was proclaimed emperor with Timesitheus as his 'second' man. That he and other highly placed equestrians were not elevated to senatorial rank may have been another result of the conflict. The same applies to the continuation of the trend of shifting power balances implicitly by presenting adjustments as temporary solutions. Whether those shifts in power and status were more subtle and therefore went unobserved, or whether the lack of contemporary historiographic evidence after 238 has distorted our view in this matter, remains unclear. Either way, the implicit character of these shifts probably contributed to the insecurity and lack of clarity of third-century administration.

Diocletian's military and administrative reforms, then, were not as radical as has often been argued. They seem to have consisted mainly in making explicit the allocation of power and status that had remained implicit until his reign. Most changes in the socio-political hierarchies from the fourth century onward represented a continuation of processes which either started or accelerated in the third century. After some generations had passed, the changes in power and status had apparently become more

acceptable. Still, the fact that Constantine eventually chose to incorporate high-ranking equestrians within the senatorial order reveals not only how much power the former had by then. It also shows that even in the early fourth century senatorial status had not lost its allure and that senatorial sensibilities could still not be ignored.

APPENDIX ONE

LIST OF EMPERORS AND USURPERS (AD 193–284)¹

Pertinax	193	Decius	249–251
Didius Iulianus	193	L. (?) Priscus	250
Septimius Severus	193–211	Iulius Valens Licinianus	250
Pescennius Niger	193–194	Trebonianus Gallus	251–253
Clodius Albinus	193–197	Uranus Antoninus	253
Caracalla	211–217	Aemilius Aemilianus	253
Geta	211	Valerianus	253–260
Macrinus	217–218	Gallienus	253–268
Diadumenianus	218	Ingenuus	260 (?)
Elagabalus	218–222	Regalianus	260 (?)
Seleuctus	?	Macrianus minor	260–261
Uranus	?	Quietus	260–261
Gellius Maximus	219 (?)	Piso	261
... s Verus	219 (?)	Valens	261
Severus Alexander	222–235	Mussius Aemilianus	261–262
L. Seius Sallustius	225(?)–227	Memor	262 (?)
Taurinus	?	Aureolus	268
Ovinus Camillus	?	Claudius II Gothicus	268–270
Maximinus Thrax	235–238	Quintillus	270
Magnus	235	Aurelianus	270–275
(Titus) Quartinus	235	Domitianus II	271
Gordianus I	238	Urbanus	271 / 272
Gordianus II	238	Septimius	271 / 272
Balbinus	238	Firmus	273
Pupienus	238	Felicissimus	270 / 271 (?)
Gordianus III	238–244	Tacitus	275–276
Sabinianus	240	Florianus	276
Philippus Arabs	244–249		
Pacatianus	248		
Iotapianus	249		
Silbannacus	?		
Sponsianus	?		

¹ This list is primarily based on Kienast (1996).

Probus	276–282	Marius	269
Bonosus	280–281	Victorinus	269–271
Proculus	280–281	Tetricus I	271–274
Carus	282–283	Tetricus II	273–274
Carinus	283–285	Faustinus	273
Numerianus	283–284		
M. Aurelius Iulianus	283	<i>Palmyrene empire</i>	260?–272
Sabinus Iulianus	284 / 285	(Septimius Odaenathus	260–267)
		Vaballathus	267–272
<i>Galic empire</i>	260–274	Zenobia	267–272
Postumus	260–269	Antiochus	272 / 273
Laelianus	269		

APPENDIX TWO

LISTS OF MEN HOLDING SENATORIAL ELITE POSITIONS BETWEEN AD 193 AND 284¹

CONSULES ORDINARI²

- 193 Q. Pompeius Socius Falco—C. Iulius Erucius Clarus Vibianus
194 Imp. Caesar L. Septimius Severus Pertinax Augustus II—D. Clodius
Septimius Albinus Caesar II
195 P. Iulius Scapula Tertullus Priscus—Q. Tineius Clemens
196 C. Domitius Dexter II—L. Valerius Messalla Thrasea Priscus
197 T. Sextius Lateranus—(L./C.) Cuspius Rufinus
198 P. Martius Sergius Saturninus—L. Aurelius Gallus
199 P. Cornelius Anullinus II—M. Aufidius Fronto
200 Ti. Claudius Severus Proculus—C. Aufidius Victorinus
201 L. Annius Fabianus—M. Nonius Arrius Mucianus
202 Imp. Severus III—Imp. Caesar M. Aurelius Severus Antoninus Augustus
203 C. Fulvius Plautianus ‘II’³—P. Septimius Geta II
204 L. Fabius Cilo Septimius Catinius Acilianus Lepidus Fulcinianus II—
M. Annius Flavius Libo
205 Imp. Antoninus II—P. Septimius Geta Caesar
206 M. Nummius Umbrius Primus Senecio Albinus—Fulvius Aemilianus
207 (L.?) Annius Maximus—L. Septimius Aper
208 Imp. Antoninus III—Geta Caesar II
209 L. Aurelius Commodus Pompeianus—Q. (Hedius) Lollianus Plautius
Avitus
210 M. Acilius Faustinus—A. Triarius Rufinus
211 (Hedius Lollianus) Terentius Gentianus—(Pomponius) Bassus
212 C. Iulius Asper II—C. Iulius Camilius Galerius Asper

¹ Office-holders whose name is preserved in such a fragmentary state that identification is impossible are excluded, as well as office-holders whose existence has been questioned.

² Based on Leunissen (1989), 133–137 (with further references) for the period AD 193–235; on John-Hartmann-Gerhardt (2008), vol. 2, 1063–1064 (with further references), for the period AD 235–284.

³ Consul ‘II’ means that a person did not actually hold a consulate before, but that *ornamenta consularia* were granted to him or that he had consular rank due to *adlectio inter consulares*.

- 213 Imp. Antoninus IV—D. Caelius (Calvinus) Balbinus II
 214 L. Valerius Messal(l)a (Apollinaris?)—C. Octavius Appius Suetrius Sabinus
 215 Q. Maecius Laetus 'II'—M. Munatius Sulla Cerialis (Cerealis)
 216 P. Cadius Sabinus II—P. Cornelius Anullinus
 217 T. Messius Extricatus 'II'—C. Bruttius Praesens
 218 Imp. Caesar M. Opellius Severus Macrinus Augustus—M. Oclatinus Adventus 'II'
 219 Imp. Caesar M. Aurel(l)ius Antoninus Augustus II—Q. Tineius Sacerdos II
 220 Imp. Antoninus III—P. Valerius Comazon 'II'
 221 C. Vettius Gratus Sabinianus—M. Flavius Vitellius Seleucus
 222 Imp. Antoninus IV—M. Aurel(l)ius Severus Alexander Caesar
 223 L. Marius Maximus Perpetuus Aurelianus II—L. Roscius Aelianus Paculus Salvius Iulianus
 224 App. Claudius Iulianus II—C. Bruttius Crispinus
 225 Ti. Manilius Fuscus II—Ser. Calpurnius Domitius Dexter
 226 Imp. Severus Alexander II—C. Aufidius Marcellus II
 227 M. Nummius Senecio Albinus—M. Laelius (Fulvius?) Maximus Aemilianus
 228 Q. Aiadius Modestus Crescentianus II—M. (Pomponius) Maecius Probus
 229 Imp. Severus Alexander III—Cassius Dio Cocceianus II
 230 L. Virius Agricola—Sex. Cadius Clementinus Priscillianus
 231 Claudius Pompeianus—T. Flavius Sallustius Paelignianus
 232 L. Virius Lupus (Iulianus?)—L. Marius Maximus
 233 L. Valerius Maximus—Cn. Cornelius Paternus
 234 M. Clodius Pupienus Maximus II—[—]ius [Su?]lla Urbanus
 235 Cn. Claudius Severus—L. Ti. Claudius Aurelius Quintianus
 236 Imp. Caesar C. Iulius Verus Maximinus Augustus—M. Pupienus Africanus
 237 L. Marius Perpetuus—L. Mummius Felix Cornelianus
 238 (C.?) Fulvius Pius—Pontius Proculus Pontianus
 239 Imp. Caesar M. Antonius Gordianus Augustus—M./M'. Acilius Aviola
 240 C. Octavius Appius Suetrius Sabinus II—(L.?) Ragonius Venustus
 241 Imp. Gordianus II—(Clodius) Pompeianus
 242 C. Vettius Gratus Atticus Sabinianus—C. Asinius Lepidus Praetextatus
 243 L. Annius Arrianus—C. Cervonius Papus
 244 Fulvius Aemilianus (II?)—Tib. Pollenius Armenius Peregrinus
 245 Imp. Caesar M. Iulius Philippus Augustus—C. Maesius Titianus
 246 C. Al[...] Albinus—C. Bruttius Praesens
 247 Imp. Philippus II—Imp. Caesar M. Iulius Severus Philippus Augustus
 248 Imp. Philippus III—Imp. Philippus II
 249 Fulvius Aemilianus II—L. Naevius Aquilinus
 250 Imp. Caesar C. Messius Quintus Traianus Decius Augustus II—Vettius Gratus
 251 Imp. Decius III—Q. Herennius Etruscus Messius Decius Caesar

- 252 Imp. Caesar C. Vibius Trebonianus Gallus Augustus II—Imp.
Caesar C. Vibius Volusianus Augustus
- 253 Imp. Volusianus II—(L.) Valerius (Cl. Poplicola Balbinus?) Maximus
- 254 Imp. Caes. P. Licinius Valerianus Aug. II—Imp. Caesar P. Licinius
Valerianus Egnatius Gallienus Aug.
- 255 Imp. Valerianus III—Imp. Gallienus II
- 256 L. Valerius (Claudius Acilius Priscilianus?) Maximus II—M. (or M.)
Acilius Glabrio
- 257 Imp. Valerianus IV—Imp. Gallienus III
- 258 M. Nummius Tuscus—Mummius Bassus
- 259 Aemilianus—(Pomponius?) Bassus
- 260 P. Cornelius Saecularis II—C. Iunius Donatus II
- 261 Imp. Gallienus IV—L. Petronius Taurus Volusianus
- 262 Imp. Gallienus V—Nummius Faus(t)ianus
- 263 Nummius Albinus II—Dexter/Maximus
- 264 Imp. Gallienus VI—Saturninus
- 265 (P. Licinius) Valerianus II—Lucillus
- 266 Imp. Gallienus VII—Sabinillus
- 267 (Ovinus?) Paternus—Arc(h)esilaus
- 268 (Aspasius?) Paternus II—(Egnatius?) Marinianus
- 269 Imp. Caesar M. Aurelius Valerius Claudius Augustus—Paternus
- 270 Flavius Antiochianus II—Virus Orfitus
- 271 Imp. Caesar L. Domitius Aurelianus Augustus—Pomponius Bassus II
- 272 (Postumius) Quietus—(Iunius) Veldumnianus
- 273 (M. Claudius?) Tacitus—(Iulius) Placidianus
- 274 Imp. Aurelianus II—Capitolinus
- 275 Imp. Aurelianus III—(Aurelius) Marcellinus
- 276 Imp. Caesar M. Claudius Tacitus Augustus II—Aemilianus
- 277 Imp. Caesar M. Aurelius Probus Augustus—(L. Iulius?) Paulinus
- 278 Imp. Probus II—Virus Lupus (II)
- 279 Imp. Probus III—Nonius Paternus
- 280 (Valerius?) Messal(l)a—(Vettius?) Gratus
- 281 Imp. Probus IV—C. Iunius Tiberianus
- 282 Imp. Probus V—Pomponius Victori(a)nus
- 283 Imp. Caesar M. Aurelius Carus Augustus II—Imp. Caesar M. Aurelius
Carinus Augustus
- 284 Imp. Carinus II—Imp. Caesar M. Aurelius Numerius Numerianus
Augustus

PRAEFECTI URBI⁴

- 193/200 T. Flavius Claudius Sulpicianus (193)
 Cornelius Repentinus (193)
 (Vibius?) Bassus (193)
 C. Domitius Dexter (193–196?)
 P. Cornelius Anullinus (196–199/203?)
- 200/210 L. Fabius Cilo (202/203–211)
- 210/220 C. Iulius Asper (211/212)
 M. Oclatinus Adventus (217)
 L. Marius Maximus (218–219)
 P. Valerius Comazon (218?–220)
 (Domitius?) Leo (Procillianus?) (218/222; 220?)
- 220/230 P. Valerius Comazon II (221)
 Fulvius (221?–222)
 P. Valerius Comazon III (222/223)
 Severus (223)
 Appius Claudius Iulianus (224)
- 230/240 M. Clodius Pupienus Maximus (234/237)
 Sabinus (238)
- 240/250 L. Caesonius Lucillus Macer Rufinianus (239/253)
 Flavius Iulius Latronianus (ca. 243)
 D. Simonius Proculus Iulianus (244/250)
 C. Messius Quintus Decius Valerianus (before 249) *UNCERTAIN*
 A. Caecina (Tacitus?) (240/254)
- 250/260 Fl(avius) Lollianus (before 254)
 L. Egnatius Victor Lollianus (254)
 L. Valerius Maximus (255)
 Nummius Albinus (256)
 C. Iunius Donatus (257)
 P. Cornelius Saecularis (258–260)
- 260/270 Nummius Albinus II (261–263)
 (Aspasius?) Paternus (264–266)
 L. Petronius Taurus Volusianus (267–268)
 Flavius Antioch(h)ianus (269–270)
- 270/280 Pomponius Bassus ... stus (270?)
 T. Flavius Postumius Varus (271)
 Flavius Antioch(h)ianus II (272)
 Virius Orfitus (273–274)
 Postumius Suagrus (275)
 Ovinus Pacatianus (276–277)
 Virius Lupus (278–280)
- 280/284 Ovinus Paternus (281)
 Pomponius Victori(a)nus (282)

⁴ Based on Leunissen (1989), 308–311 (with further references) for the period AD 193–235; on Johne-Hartmann-Gerhardt (2008), vol. 2, 1065–1068 (with further references), for the period AD 235–284. Men who were appointed *vice praefecti* are not included.

PROCONSULES AFRICAE⁵

- 193/200 Pollienus Auspex? (probably 185/200)
 C. Vettius Sabinianus Iulius Hospes (190/200)
 M. Claudius Macrinus Vindex Hermogenianus (193/211)
 Sex. Cocceius Vibianus (193/217)
 Cingius Severus (before 197)
 P. Cornelius Anullinus (193)
 L. Cossonius Eggius Marullus (198/199)
 M. Ulpius Arabianus (ca. 200?)
- 200/210 C. Iulius Asper (200/210)
 M. Umbrius Primus (ca. 202?)
 Q. Caecilius [...] (202?)
 Minicius Opimianus (202/203)
 Rufinus (203/204)
 M. Valerius Bradua Mauricus (202/208, ca. 206?)
 T. Flavius Decimus (209)
 C. Valerius Pudens (209/212)
- 210/220 P. Iulius Scapula Tertullus Priscus (212/213)
 Appius Claudius Iulianus (212/222)
 L. Marius Maximus Perpetuus Aurelianus (213/214 or 216/217)
 M. Aufidius Fronto (*sortitus*, 217)
 C. Caesonius Macer Rufinianus (213?/215, or—less likely—
 218/222?)⁶
 L. Marius Perpetuus (or *procos Asiae?*; ca. 220)
- 220/230 L. Cassius Dio Cocceianus (ca. 221)
- 230/240 C. Octavius Appius Suetrius Sabinus (ca. 230)
 M. Antonius Gordianus Sempronianus Romanus Africanus
 (237/238)
 Sabinianus (240)
- 240/250 L. Caesonius Lucillus Macer Rufinianus (after 238; not before
 240/1)
- 250/260 Aspasius Paternus (257/258)
 Galerius Maximus (258/259)
 L. Mes[sius ...] (probably 259/60 or 260/1)
 Vibius Passienus (260/268) *UNCERTAIN*
- 260/270 L. Naevius Aquilinus (260/268)
 Sex. Cocceius Anicius Faustus Paulinus (probably ca. 265/268)
- 270/280 Firmus (273) *UNCERTAIN*
 L. Caesonius Ovinius Manlius Rufinianus Bassus (ca. 275)
- 280/284 L. Iulius (?) Paulinus (283)

⁵ Based on Thomasson (1996), 74–102 (with further references) and on John-Hartmann-Gerhardt (2008), vol. 2, 1090–1095 (with further references). Men who were appointed *vice proconsulis* are not included.

⁶ This date differs from the date mentioned by Thomasson (1996), 86–87, no. 118, who assumes that the proconsulship was held under Elagabalus or Severus Alexander. See section 2.2 on the Caesonii and the dates of the positions held by them.

PROCONSULES ASIAE⁷

- 193/200 L. Albinus Saturninus (190/200)
 Asellius Aemilianus (192/193)
 (M. Gavius) Gallicanus (or proconsul Africae?, 195/200?)
 Q. Licinius Nepos (198/208)
 Q. Aurelius Polus Terentianus (198/208)
 Q. Tineius Sacerdos (199/211)
- 200/210 Q. Hedius Rufus Lollianus Gentianus (201/202)
 Tarius Titianus (202/205?)
 L. Calpurnius Proculus (202/205?)
 Popilius Peditus Propianus (204/5 or 205/6)
 Q. Caecilius Secundus Servilianus (208/209)
 T. Manilius Fuscus (209/210?)
- 210/220 C. Gabinius Barbarus Pompeianus? (211/213)
 Gavius Tranquillus (211/213)
 M.? Iunius Consessus Aemilianus (213/214?)
 L. Marius Maximus Perpetuus Aurelianus (213/215)
 C. Iulius Avitus Alexianus (215/217)
 C. Iulius Asper (*designatus*, 217)
 Q. Anicius Faustus (217/218)
- 220/230 (M. Nummius Umbrius Primus Senecio) Albinus (ca. 221)
 M. Aufidius Fronto (219/222)
 C. Aufidius Marcellus (219/222)
 Q. (Hedius) Lollianus Plautius Avitus (222/235; ca. 224)
 Q. Ai(acius Modestinus Crescentianus?) (222/235)
 Q. (Virius/Vibius Egnatius) Sulpicius Priscus (222/235)
- 230/240 M. Clodius Pupienus Maximus (before 234)
 Amicus (230/232)
 Valerius Messala (236/238)
 M. Triarius Rufinus Asin(ius) Sabinianus (238/240)
- 240/250 L. Egnatius Victor Lollianus (*proconsul ter*, 242–245)
 C. Iulius Fl. Proculus Quintilianus (249/250)
- 250/260 C. Iulius Octavius Volusenna Rogatianus (ca. 253/256)
- 270/280 Iul(ius) Proculus (276)
- 280/283 Asclepiodotus (*praeses*, 283)

⁷ Based on Leunissen (1989), 222–228 (with further references) for the period AD 193–235; on Johne-Hartmann-Gerhardt (2008), vol. 2, 1102–1104 (with further references), for the period AD 235–284. Men who were appointed *vice proconsulis* are not included.

APPENDIX THREE

LIST OF *PRAEFECTI PRAETORIO* BETWEEN AD 193 AND 284¹

Q. Aemilius Laetus (*PIR*² A 358)

Date of Prefecture (Emperor served) 192–193 (Commodus; Pertinax)
Literature with further references Howe, 68, no. 13

T. Flavius Genialis (*PIR*² F 277)

Date of Prefecture (Emperor served) 193 (Didius Iulianus)
Literature with further references Howe, 68, no. 14

Tullius Crispinus (*PIR* T 273)

Date of Prefecture (Emperor served) 193 (Didius Iulianus)
Literature with further references Howe, 68, no. 15

Veturius Macrinus (*PIR* V 361)

Date of Prefecture (Emperor served) 193 (Didius Iulianus; Septimius Severus?)
Literature with further references Howe, 68–69, no. 16

Flavius Iuvenalis (*PIR*² F 300)

Date of Prefecture (Emperor served) 193 (Didius Iulianus; Septimius Severus?)
Literature with further references Howe, 69, no. 17

C. Fulvius Plautianus (*PIR*² F 554)

Date of Prefecture (Emperor served) 197–205 (Septimius Severus)
Literature with further references Howe, 69–70, no. 18; Chastagnol, 63, no. 1

Q. Aemilius Saturninus (*PIR*² A 403)

Date of Prefecture (Emperor served) 199 / 200 (Septimius Severus)
Literature with further references Howe, 70, no. 19

¹ This list is based on Howe (1942), 65–95 (= Howe); Chastagnol (1970), 63–68 (= Chastagnol); and Johne-Hartmann-Gerhardt (2008) (= Johne), 1071–1077. Those prefects who are not considered historical or whose historicity is doubted by these scholars are excluded from this list, as are prefects whose name and identity are unknown and prefects of doubtful date.

Q. Maecius Laetus (PIR² M 54)

- Date of Prefecture (Emperor served)* 205–211 / 215? (Septimius Severus; Caracalla?)
Literature with further references Howe, 71, no. 21; Chastagnol, 63, no. 2

Aemilius Papinianus (PIR² A 388)

- Date of Prefecture (Emperor served)* 205–211 (Septimius Severus; Caracalla)
Literature with further references Howe, 71–72, no. 22; Chastagnol, 63, no. 3

Cn. Marcius Rustius Rufinus (PIR² M 246)

- Date of Prefecture (Emperor served)* 210 or 212 (Septimius Severus or Caracalla)
Literature with further references Howe, 72, no. 24; Chastagnol, 63–64, no. 4

M. Opellius Macrinus (PIR² O 108)

- Date of Prefecture (Emperor served)* 213 / 217 (Caracalla)
Literature with further references Howe, 72–73, no. 25; Chastagnol, 64, no. 5

M. Oclatinus Adventus (PIR² O 99)

- Date of Prefecture (Emperor served)* 212 / 216?–218 (Caracalla)
Literature with further references Howe, 73, no. 26; Chastagnol, 64, no. 6

Ulpus Iulianus (PIR V 555)

- Date of Prefecture (Emperor served)* 217?–218 (Macrinus)
Literature with further references Howe, 73, no. 27; Chastagnol, 64, no. 7

Iulianus Nestor (PIR² I 99)

- Date of Prefecture (Emperor served)* 217?–218 (Macrinus)
Literature with further references Howe, 74, no. 28; Chastagnol, 64, no. 8

Iulius Basilianus (PIR² I 201)

- Date of Prefecture (Emperor served)* 218 (Macrinus)
Literature with further references Howe, 74, no. 29; Chastagnol, 64, no. 9

P. Valerius Comazon (PIR V 42)

- Date of Prefecture (Emperor served)* 218-? (Elagabalus)
Literature with further references Howe, 74, no. 30; Chastagnol, 64, no. 10

Iulius Flavianus (PIR² I 312)

- Date of Prefecture (Emperor served)* 218 (Elagabalus)
Literature with further references Chastagnol, 64, no. 11

... atus

- Date of Prefecture (Emperor served)* 218 / 222, 221? (Elagabalus)
Literature with further references Howe, 75, no. 31; Chastagnol, 65, no. 12

Antiochianus (PIR² A 738)

- Date of Prefecture (Emperor served)* 221-? (Elagabalus)
Literature with further references Howe, 75, no. 32; Chastagnol, 65, no. 13

Flavianus

Date of Prefecture (Emperor served) 222 (Severus Alexander)
Literature with further references Howe, 75, no. 34; Chastagnol, 65, no. 15

Geminus Chrestus (PIR² G 144)

Date of Prefecture (Emperor served) 222 (Severus Alexander)
Literature with further references Howe, 75, no. 35; Chastagnol, 65, no. 16

Domitius Ulpianus (PIR² D 169)

Date of Prefecture (Emperor served) 222–223 (Severus Alexander)
Literature with further references Howe, 75–76, no. 36; Chastagnol, 65, no. 17

M. Aedinius Iulianus (PIR² A 113)

Date of Prefecture (Emperor served) 220/238, circa 223 (Severus Alexander or Gordianus III)
Literature with further references Howe, 76, no. 38; Chastagnol, 65, no. 19; John, 1074, PPO 22

L. Domitius Honoratus (PIR² D 151)

Date of Prefecture (Emperor served) 223 (Severus Alexander)
Literature with further references Howe, 76, no. 37; Chastagnol, 65, no. 21

Vitalianus (PIR V 492)

Date of Prefecture (Emperor served) 238 (Maximinus Thrax)
Literature with further references Howe, 77, no. 40; Chastagnol, 66, no. 26; John, 1071, PPO 1

(Anolinus/Anullinus?)

Date of Prefecture (Emperor served) 238 (Maximinus Thrax)
Literature with further references Howe, 77, no. 41–42; John, 1071, PPO 2

Domitius (PIR² D 123)

Date of Prefecture (Emperor served) 240 (Gordianus III)
Literature with further references Howe, 78, no. 44; Chastagnol, 66, no. 27; John, 1071, PPO 3

C. Furius Sabinus Aquila Timesitheus (PIR² F 581)

Date of Prefecture (Emperor served) 241–243 (Gordianus III)
Literature with further references Howe, 78–79, no. 45; Chastagnol, 66, no. 28; John, 1071, PPO 4

C. Iulius Priscus (PIR² I 488)

Date of Prefecture (Emperor served) 242/244 (Gordianus III); 247–249 (Philippus Arabs)
Literature with further references Howe, 79, no. 46; Chastagnol, 66, no. 20; 31; John, 1071–1072, PPO 5

M. Iulius Philippus (PIR² I 461)

Date of Prefecture (Emperor served) 243–244 (Gordianus III)
Literature with further references Howe, 79–80, no. 47; Chastagnol, 66, no. 30; John, 1072, PPO 6

M. Attius Cornelianus (*PIR*² A 1353)

- Date of Prefecture (Emperor served)* 238 / 249 (Gordianus III or Philippus Arabs)
Literature with further references Howe, 76–77, no. 39 (dating his prefecture ca. 230); Chastagnol, 66, no. 32; John, 1072, PPO 7

Q. Herennius Potens (*PIR*² H 120)

- Date of Prefecture (Emperor served)* 3rd century, 249–251? (Decius?)
Literature with further references Howe, 86, no. 64; Chastagnol, 66, no. 33; John, 1072, PPO 8

Ae[li]us Fir[mius?]

- Date of Prefecture (Emperor served)* Circa 253 / 256 (Valerianus?)
Literature with further references John, 1072, PPO 10

Successianus (*PIR*² S 943)

- Date of Prefecture (Emperor served)* 254 / 255–260? (Valerianus)
Literature with further references Howe, 80–81, no. 49; Chastagnol, 67, no. 35 (dating his prefecture from 256 / 257); John, 1073, PPO 11–12

L. Petronius Taurus Volusianus (*PIR*² P 313; *PLRE* I, Volusianus 6)

- Date of Prefecture (Emperor served)* 260—? (Gallienus)
Literature with further references Howe, 82, no. 52; Chastagnol, 67, no. 37; John, 1073, PPO 13

Ballista (Callistus) (*PIR*² B 41; *PLRE* I, Ballista)

- Date of Prefecture (Emperor served)* 260–261 (Valerianus?; Macrianus minor and Quietus)
Literature with further references Howe, 81–82, no. 51; Chastagnol, 67, no. 36; John, 1073, PPO 14

Aurelius Heraclianus (*PLRE* I, Heraclianus 6)

- Date of Prefecture (Emperor served)* 267 / 268 (Gallienus)
Literature with further references Howe, 82, no. 53; Chastagnol, 67, no. 38; John, 1073, PPO 15

Iulius Placidianus (*PIR*² I 468; *PLRE* I, Placidianus 2)

- Date of Prefecture (Emperor served)* 270–273? (Aurelianus)
Literature with further references Howe, 82, no. 54; Chastagnol, 67, no. 39; John, 1073, PPO 16

M. Annius Florianus (*PIR*² A 649; *PLRE* I, Florianus 6)

- Date of Prefecture (Emperor served)* 275–276 (Tacitus)
Literature with further references Howe, 83, no. 55; Chastagnol, 67, no. 40; John, 1073, PPO 17

M. Aurelius Carus (*PIR*² A 1475; *PLRE* I, Carus)

- Date of Prefecture (Emperor served)* 276–282 (Probus)
Literature with further references Howe, 83, no. 56; Chastagnol, 67, no. 41; John, 1074, PPO 18

(M. Aurelius) Sabinus Iulianus**(PIR² A 1538; PLRE I, Iulianus 38, cf. Iulianus 24)***Date of Prefecture (Emperor served)* 283 / 284? (Carus and Numerianus)*Literature with further references* Howe, 85, no. 62; Johne, 1074, PPO 19**(L. Flavius?) Aper (PIR² A 909; PLRE I, Aper 2, cf. Aper 3)***Date of Prefecture (Emperor served)* 284 (Carus?; Numerianus)*Literature with further references* Howe, 83–84, no. 57; Chastagnol, 67, no. 42; Johne, 1074, PPO 20**T. Claudius Aurelius Aristobulus (PIR² C 806; PLRE I, Aristobulus)***Date of Prefecture (Emperor served)* 284–285 (Carinus; Diocletianus)*Literature with further references* Howe, 84, no. 58; Chastagnol, 67, no. 43; Johne, 1074, PPO 21.INCERTI²**Valerius Patruinus (PIR V 103)***Date of Prefecture (Emperor served)* 212 (Caracalla)*Literature with further references* Howe, 72, no. 23**T. Lorenus Celsus (PIR² L 343)***Date of Prefecture (Emperor served)* 223? (Severus Alexander?)*Literature with further references* Chastagnol, 65, no. 18**L. Didius Marinus (PIR² D 71)***Date of Prefecture (Emperor served)* 223 (Severus Alexander)*Literature with further references* Chastagnol, 65, no. 20**Silvanus or Albanus (PIR² S 737)***Date of Prefecture (Emperor served)* 258–260 (Valerianus and Gallienus)*Literature with further references* Howe, 81, no. 50; Johne, 1075, PPO 23a

² *Incerti* are those whose identification specifically as praetorian prefects is not attested, but depends on conjecture from surviving evidence.

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GENERAL INDEX

- Ab epistulis*, 146–147, 150, 153–155
- Accessibility, imperial, 35–37, 44, 47–48
- Achaia (Greece), 57, 68, 91, 100–102, 222, 226, 234
- A cognitionibus*, 151–152, 155
- Adlectio*, 22, 51, 110, 136, 153, 155, 197, 212, 225, 257
- Adoption, 52–53, 71–73, 118
- Advocatus fisci*, 135, 151, 172
- Aegyptus (Egypt), 1, 11, 16, 28, 39, 71–73, 121–122, 132–133, 136–138, 147–148, 151, 158, 168, 177, 181, 212, 222–223, 226
- Africa, 11–12, 14, 23–24, 31, 46, 51, 53–54, 57–59, 61–63, 65, 68, 70, 77, 79–80, 82, 84, 86–88, 90–92, 100, 103, 105–106, 109–114, 116, 118–121, 123, 126–127, 129, 132, 134, 140, 146, 150, 181–182, 198, 203, 205, 209–210, 250, 261–262
- Agens vice*, 139, 148, 158, 188, 252; *a.v. legati legionis* 143, 215, 229; *a.v. praefecti* 148, 260; *a.v. praesidis* 138–141, 143, 183, 215, 220, 229, 252; *a.v. proconsulis* 54, 59, 92, 139, 261–262; *a.v. procuratoris* 138–139
- Alamanni, 29, 126, 219, 221
- Album of Canusium, 167, 180
- Alexandria, 39, 148, 212, 226
- A libellis*, 147, 150–153, 172–173
- A memoria*, 147, 173
- Amicitia*, 24, 58, 90, 99, 106, 119–120, 126, 133, 161, 172–173, 198, 205
- Annona militaris*, 145, 174–175
- Antiocheia, 30, 39, 65, 97, 161, 196, 212
- Antonine emperors, 1, 52, 76, 90–91, 121, 135
- Aquileia, 24, 38, 144, 146
- Arabia, 25, 33, 69–70, 102, 110, 131, 138–139, 141, 180
- Aragua, 37, 149, 174
- A rationibus*, 129, 145, 147–148, 153, 173–174
- Asia, 11, 14, 24, 29, 37, 39, 46, 51, 53–55, 57, 65, 68, 70, 77, 79–80, 84, 86, 88, 91, 101, 106–112, 117, 119–120, 122–124, 126, 129, 131–132, 139–140, 144, 149, 151, 174, 181–182, 196–197, 199, 204–205, 210–211, 224, 234, 250, 261–262
- Assessor*, 151, 211
- A studiis*, 150, 153, 173
- Augsburg, 32, 220
- Augustus* (title), 25, 27, 33–34, 37, 43, 126, 257–259
- Bachrach, P., 4–5
- Balkans, *see* Illyrian area
- Baratz, M., 4–5
- Barbarian invasions, *see* invasions
- Belgica, *see* Gallia Belgica
- Beneventum, 61, 65, 103, 114
- Bithynia et Pontus, 13, 39, 65, 101, 103, 106, 139, 150, 196, 199, 211
- Border regions, 24–25, 28–31, 38, 40, 43, 45–46, 73, 77, 142, 186, 188, 196, 209, 216, 219–220, 232, 234–235, 238, 240–245, 248, 250

- Bourdieu, P., 7–8
 Brigetio, 56, 203
 Britannia, 30, 32, 34, 70, 101, 116,
 121, 130, 132–133, 160, 166, 194,
 205, 207–210, 213–215, 220–221,
 241, 243–244
 Brixia, 65, 86, 114, 147, 173
 Byzantium, Constantinople, 39, 109,
 114, 198, 202
- Caesar* (title), 24–25, 33–35, 41, 43,
 160, 163, 194, 201, 203, 257–259
 Campania, 57, 59, 114, 123, 132
Candidatus, 58, 61, 63, 67, 92, 98,
 104–110, 112, 114, 121–128, 130,
 203
 Cappadocia, 39, 94, 153, 195
 Carpi, 29, 34, 37–38, 186
Castra Peregrina, 166–167, 228
 Cavalry, 135, 144, 199, 202, 218, 230,
 234–235, 237, 239, 244–245
 Cavalry commanders, 26, 195, 201–
 202, 217, 224, 228, 235–239, 245
Censitor, 68–69, 106, 108, 205
Centurio, 8, 27, 37, 136, 145, 149,
 156, 167, 227–228, 230–231
 Circa, 68–69, 87, 122
 Citizenship, 8, 26, 141, 224
 Civil-administrative authority, 11–
 12, 36, 41–42, 78, 80, 135, 140,
 142–143, 148, 169, 173, 175–176,
 186, 189, 197, 214–215, 244, 247,
 250
 Civil wars, 30, 40, 46, 74, 111, 206,
 208
Clarissimus, 12, 83, 90–91, 99, 108,
 115, 158, 176–182, 225
Codex Iustinianus, 16, 152, 171
Cohors praetoriana, 159, 167, 228,
 230
 Cologne, 29, 32, 34, 39, 163, 220–
 221
 Colonia Carthaginensium, 61, 92
Comites, 58–59, 62, 89–91, 93, 106,
 108, 119–120, 124, 126, 160–161,
 196, 199, 201–203, 208–212, 214,
 231, 240, 242
- Consilium*, imperial, 151–153, 170,
 172–173, 200
 Constantinople, *see* Byzantium
Consularis, 25, 51, 86, 95, 100, 116,
 123, 131–132, 134, 153, 205, 212,
 225, 241, 257
Corpus Iuris Civilis, 16–17
Corrector, 69, 78, 86, 91, 101, 119,
 123, 128, 148, 183, 190, 251;
corrector Orientis 43, 222, 225–
 226
 Cultural capital, 7–8, 252
Curator alvei Tiberis, 57, 59, 61, 63,
 86, 91–92, 124, 126
Curator aquarum et Miniciae, 57, 59,
 63, 91–92, 114, 123–124
Curator rei publicae, 14, 57–59, 61,
 63, 68–69, 78, 87, 91–92, 95, 100,
 102, 106, 109–110, 112, 118, 122,
 124, 129, 131, 183, 190, 197, 251
*Curator viae Flaminiae et alimento-
 rum*, 122, 127–128
Cursus honorum, 11–12, 22, 24, 28,
 51, 53, 56, 61, 70, 78, 136, 177,
 181, 197, 209
 Cyprus, 195, 211
- Dacia, 26, 29, 69, 93, 107, 110, 116,
 129, 138, 155, 164, 194, 201–202,
 211, 217, 218, 222, 228, 236
 Dahl, R., 3–6, 10, 46, 80, 88, 188–
 189, 247
 Dalmatia, 14, 26, 65, 93–95, 112,
 116–117, 129, 141, 152, 202–
 203, 211, 221–222, 234, 236–
 237, 245
 Danubian area, 24–25, 29, 31, 33, 39,
 143–144, 156, 194, 199, 205, 215,
 218–219, 228, 234–235, 243
 Deputy, 59, 61, 115, 126, 133, 138–
 139, 148, 165, 176, 186–187
Dux, 27, 126, 130, 141–143, 148,
 158, 166, 189, 196–199, 201, 207,
 216–218, 220–221, 224, 226, 230–
 236, 242; *dux equitum* 26, 201,
 216, 222, 231, 237, 239, 242; *dux
 exercitus* 109, 111, 196–197, 199,

- 235; *dux Romanorum* 225–226;
dux vexillationum 126, 201, 231
- Edessa, 30, 206
- Edict, 36, 45, 144, 246
- Egregius*, 158
- Emesa, 34, 225
- Eminentissimus*, 158, 177, 180–181
- Entourage, imperial, 44, 108, 149–
150, 153–157, 161, 170, 182, 186,
214, 228, 231, 240, 242, 245, 248
- Epigraphic habit, 12–13
- Epitome de Caesaribus*, 16, 120
- Etruria, 65, 103, 123, 129, 227
- Euphrates, 30, 149, 225
- Exarchos*, ἑξαρχος, 222, 224
- Exercitus Illyricus*, 196–197, 199,
201–202
- Exercitus Moesiacus*, 109, 196–197,
201
- Exile, 74, 90, 155, 172, 211
- Expeditio Gallica*, 108, 146, 201, 206
- Fasti*, 51, 72, 75, 90, 98–99, 103, 105,
108, 112, 115, 118, 120, 125, 127,
130, 139
- Field armies, 164, 167–169, 199–
200, 213, 219, 228, 230, 238–240,
242, 244–245
- Financial authority, 1, 8, 11, 41–42,
57, 61, 63, 65, 68–69, 78, 80, 135,
141, 188, 208–209, 250
- Fiscus*, 41, 61, 92, 135, 156
- Flavian emperors, 22, 135, 177
- Foucault, M., 3, 5
- Gallia, 29, 32, 43, 65, 94, 129, 144–
145, 151, 165, 200–201, 219–221,
239; Gallia Belgica 109, 138,
154, 205–206, 208, 210; Gallia
Lugdunensis 106, 108–109, 169,
195, 197, 205, 207, 220; Gallia
Narbonensis 27, 56, 65, 91, 129,
165–166, 169, 181, 187, 195, 221
- Gallic empire, 32–34, 40, 43, 46, 165,
221–222, 232, 234–235, 252, 256
- Generals, 26, 39, 44, 47, 73–74, 88,
96–98, 111, 132–133, 140, 166,
168, 193, 198–201, 213–215, 217–
218, 221–223, 231, 233, 236, 238–
239, 242, 244–245, 249
- Geographic origin, 28, 55–56, 65, 88,
90, 107, 117, 132
- Germania, 56, 69, 151, 154; Ger-
mania Inferior 25, 109, 130, 133,
138–139, 165, 201, 205, 216, 220,
228; Germania Superior 29, 57,
91, 94–95, 100, 138, 196, 235
- Germanic tribes, 25, 29–30, 32, 38,
138, 186, 216, 234
- Goths, 29, 38, 141, 161, 165, 168,
187, 229–231, 233–234
- Grand set, 76–77
- Hatra, 30, 204
- Heruli, 29, 161, 187, 229, 231, 233–
234
- Hispania (Spain), 32, 116; Hispania
Baetica 24, 198; Hispania
Citerior/Tarraconensis 25, 57,
68, 70, 107, 140, 146, 205–206,
210, 220; Hispania Lusitania 206
- Historia Augusta*, 14–15, 26, 59, 73,
97, 107, 112, 113, 115, 125, 145,
162–163, 165–166, 168, 172, 183,
195, 197, 206, 217–219, 221–223,
226, 232–233, 236
- Historiography, 12–13, 15, 167, 210,
253
- Homo novus*, 22, 24, 45, 51, 56, 72,
74, 88, 136, 142, 158, 213, 215,
242, 244
- Illyrian area (Balkans), 24, 26, 28–
31, 39, 73, 129, 140–141, 187,
216–218, 221–222, 224, 226–228,
233–234, 236, 238–239, 242
- Illyrian origin, 26, 28, 221, 236
- Imperial family, 34, 44, 150, 160,
163, 175, 178, 187
- Imperial property, 78, 135, 138–139
- Imperial secretaries, 135, 137, 145,
149–155, 157–158, 188, 190, 250
- Imperial staff, 174, 176, 184

- Imperium*, 6, 69, 186–187, 190, 221
In absentia, 86, 88, 94, 117–118, 205, 225
 Intellectuals, 149–150, 153–154, 156–157, 188–189, 248, 250–252
 Invasions, 29, 39, 46, 68, 70, 80, 146, 198, 207, 216, 219–220, 232–234, 239, 245
 Issues, 198–200
 Italy, 1, 11, 22–25, 28–29, 32, 35, 38, 46, 56–70, 77–80, 84, 88, 90–91, 94, 98–99, 107, 109–111, 113–114, 117, 120, 125–129, 131–132, 136, 144, 147–150, 161, 165–167, 169–170, 173–175, 178–184, 186, 190, 194, 203, 216, 219, 224, 227, 229, 233–235, 243, 250–251
Iudex (vice Caesaris, vice sacra), 42, 61, 69, 78, 92, 116–118, 132, 151, 153
Iuridicus, 68–69, 78, 102, 107, 118, 129, 203
 Iuthungi, 29, 32, 216–217, 224

 Judicial authority, 11, 16, 35, 37, 41–42, 46, 55, 58–59, 61, 63, 69, 78, 80, 110, 117–118, 133, 135, 140, 149, 151, 153, 155, 168–173, 175, 182, 184–185, 189, 250
 Jurisdiction, 34, 69, 169–171, 175, 183
 Jurist, *see* lawyer

 Latium, 56–59, 61, 65, 125, 147
 Lawyer, jurist, 16–17, 149, 151–157, 160, 168, 171–173, 175, 185, 188–189, 250
 Legal authority, *see* judicial authority
 Legal sources, 16, 52, 66
Legatus legionis, 31, 68, 70, 100, 106–107, 109–110, 121, 125, 129, 195–196, 198, 201, 203, 207, 235
Legio I Adiutrix, 56, 91, 194, 201, 210
Legio I Italica, 109, 129, 194
Legio I Minervia, 207
Legio I Parthica, 206
Legio II Adiutrix, 143, 229
Legio II Augusta, 121
Legio II Parthica, 44, 143, 165–166
Legio III Augusta, 167
Legio III Gallica, 31, 168
Legio III Italica, 109, 129
Legio III Parthica, 206
Legio IV Flavia Felix, 102, 201, 203, 230–231
Legio IV Scythica, 31, 110, 195
Legio V Macedonica, 144, 201
Legio VII Claudia P.F., 57, 91, 127, 231
Legio VII Gemina, 106, 107
Legio VIII Augusta, 100, 196
Legio X Gemina, 228
Legio XIII Gemina, 93, 107, 144, 201, 230
Legio XIV Gemina, 129, 228
Legio XVI Flavia Firma, 110, 195
Legio XXII Primigenia, 106, 108–109, 196–197, 235
Legio XXX Ulpia Victrix, 165
 Legitimacy, 45, 47, 81, 85, 186
 Lepcis Magna, 23, 178, 194
Liberti, 149–150, 188
 Liguria, 65, 107, 129
Limes, 29, 142, 189, 220
 Local elites, 25, 70, 72, 99, 174, 219, 224, 233, 238, 240, 245
 Loyalty, 45, 74, 161–163, 187, 240–241, 243, 245
 Lugdunum, 109, 133, 202–204, 207
 Lukes, S., 3–5, 252
 Lycia et Pamphylia, 70, 113, 117–118, 131, 140–141

 Macedonia, 139, 141, 222, 226–227
 Maeatae, 30, 207
 Magistrate, 10, 22, 30, 174, 186
 Marcomanni, 90, 146, 197, 219
 Marriage, 6, 17, 25, 38, 71, 73, 102–103, 112, 178
 Mauretania Caesariensis, 23, 59, 137, 141–143, 158, 208, 229–230
 Mauretania Tingitana, 137, 200, 229

- Mediolanum (Milan), 23, 144, 216, 234–236, 240
- Mesopotamia, 30, 32, 137–138, 142, 149, 160–161, 165, 181, 199–200, 203–204, 206, 210–212, 231, 272
- Military authority, 36, 41, 45, 68, 70–71, 140, 160–169, 186, 189, 210–211, 224, 226, 239–240, 245, 248
- Military background, 36, 158, 168–169
- Military cadre, 8, 149, 156, 183, 231, 242, 248
- Military crisis, 38, 74, 140, 143, 157, 169, 174–175, 184, 186–189, 210, 213, 215, 238, 242, 245–246, 248, 250
- Military logistics, 135, 137, 139, 141–147, 149, 156, 169, 211, 214, 248
- Military professionals, 23, 28, 44–45, 157, 189–190, 239–240, 245, 251–252
- Misenum, 166, 208
- Mobile elite forces, 219, 245
- Mobile field armies, 44, 230, 239–240, 244–245
- Moesia, 25–26, 69, 119–120, 142–143, 194, 217–218, 222, 233; Moesia Inferior 23, 69–70, 86, 88, 116, 118–119, 155, 194, 198, 207, 234; Moesia Superior 25–26, 57, 69, 86, 88, 94–95, 102, 110, 119, 201, 203, 214, 234
- Moguntiacum (Mainz), 108, 196–197, 235
- Nicaea, 39, 198
- Nicomedia, 39, 197, 211
- Nisibis, 30, 204
- Nomenclature, 26–27, 52, 71, 84, 105
- Noricum, 118, 137, 153–154, 194, 202
- Numidia, 24, 65, 68–70, 86, 88, 100, 103, 117, 122, 139–140, 142, 167, 199
- Orator, 22, 37, 106, 122, 149–150, 157
- Ordo equester*, 8, 11, 19, 23, 49, 51, 136–137, 139–140, 145, 157, 159, 177, 188–191, 251, 253
- Ordo senatorius*, 8, 11–12, 19, 49–50, 72, 76, 78, 81, 111, 129, 135–136, 155, 177–178, 188, 244, 248, 254
- Ornamenta (consularia, praetoria)*, 177–182, 212, 220, 225, 257
- Osrhoeni, 199, 206
- Paideia*, 8–9, 45, 71, 157, 188, 190, 252
- Palace, 38, 40, 160, 182
- Palmyra, 30, 32–33, 38–39, 43, 46, 165, 222, 224–225, 232, 252; Palmyrene empire 33, 43, 256
- Pannonia, 203, 207, 216–217, 219, 222; Pannonia Inferior 25, 40, 69, 141, 143, 155, 169, 206, 208, 211, 218, 229; Pannonia Superior 14, 31, 56, 102, 143–144, 169, 194, 203, 205–206, 213, 218
- Parthia, 30, 245; Parthian wars 30, 39, 74, 108, 160, 166, 195, 197, 199–200, 204–205, 208, 211–212, 215, 241, 244
- Patria*, 64, 66, 78–79
- Patrician status, 22, 24, 28, 45, 58, 61, 63–64, 67–68, 70, 76, 79–81, 84–85, 88–90, 98–99, 105, 108, 112, 114, 118, 120, 122–123, 127, 129–130, 133, 178–179, 181, 196, 198, 200, 203
- Patronage, 65, 79, 106, 114, 154, 167, 180, 227, 231
- Peace, 2, 30, 36–38, 44, 69, 80, 162, 164, 204, 215, 219, 231, 241, 244–245, 250
- Perfectissimus*, 158, 188, 190, 220, 251
- Perinthus, 39, 196
- Periphery, 28, 40, 44, 47, 188–189, 240, 248–249
- Persia, Persians, 30–32, 34, 38–40, 43, 58, 101, 147, 149, 161, 165, 168, 216, 222–226, 232

- Petitions, 9, 36–37, 149, 151–152
 Plague, 46, 74, 197
 Political elite, 6, 12, 32, 40, 77, 135, 247–248
 Political withdrawal, 78–79
 Power set, 76–77
Praefectus adversus latrones, 62
Praefectus Aegypti, 11, 121, 136, 147–148, 158, 168, 222, 226, 181
Praefectus alae, 135, 141
Praefectus alimentorum, 102, 116, 118, 124, 210–211
Praefectus annonae, 11, 62, 90, 147, 152, 195
Praefectus classis, 148, 158
Praefectus cohortis, 129, 135, 202
Praefectus legionis, 141, 143, 229
Praefectus Mesopotamiae et Osrhoenae, 206
Praefectus praetorio, praetorian prefect, 11, 18–19, 23–25, 27, 34, 39, 42–43, 109, 114, 127, 135, 137–138, 145, 147, 151–152, 158–187, 189–190, 212, 220, 222–224, 227–232, 234, 236, 250–252, 263–267
Praefectus tironibus, 23, 62
Praefectus urbi, city prefect, 11, 25, 42, 51, 53–54, 59–60, 62, 63, 67–68, 70, 79, 85–87, 92–93, 98, 101, 103–105, 109, 111, 113–115, 118–125, 126–127, 130, 132–134, 150, 161, 166–167, 170, 205, 209–210, 212, 229, 234, 237, 260
Praefectus vehiculorum, 145, 147–148, 172
Praefectus vigilum, 152, 158, 161, 165–166, 178, 208, 227–228
Praepositus, 146, 169, 195, 199–200, 228, 230–231; *praepositus annonae* 146, 148, 222; *praepositus equitum* 195, 214, 228; *praepositus vexillationibus* 126, 129, 144, 194, 196, 201
Praeses, 70, 86, 110, 113, 131–132, 140–143, 158, 169, 183, 203, 209–210, 222, 229–230, 234, 252, 262
Praetor, 14, 56, 58, 61, 63, 87, 91–93, 96–97, 102, 104–108, 110, 112, 114, 117, 121–124, 126, 131, 151, 153, 203
 Praetorian guard, 24, 31, 44, 149, 159, 213, 228, 230
 Predecessor, imperial, 26, 40, 139, 143, 161, 203, 252
Primpili, 8, 136, 141, 146, 156, 228–231
Princeps, Principate, 11, 21–22, 35, 51, 77, 81, 125, 135–137, 149, 159, 171, 186–187, 201, 213, 236
 Proclamation, imperial, 23–28, 31–32, 34, 38, 40, 42, 44, 47, 57, 146, 148, 184–185, 195–199, 201–202, 216–218, 220, 223, 226–227, 235, 237, 239–240, 245, 253
 Proconsul, 11, 14, 24, 51, 53–55, 57–59, 61, 63, 67–68, 70, 79, 84–88, 91–92, 101, 106–124, 126–127, 129, 131–132, 134, 139, 181, 198, 204–205, 210–211, 222, 226, 261–262
Procurator, 37, 109–111, 135, 138–140, 145, 147–148, 152, 154, 172, 174, 195, 197, 206, 208–211, 228–230; *procur. ad alimenta* 147; *procur. ad annonam, annonae* 146–147, 194–195, 211; *procur. aerarii maioris* 172; *procur. arcae* 146–148, 222; *procur. Augusti* 137, 208; *procur. Mauretaniae Caesariensis* 158, 208; *procur. rationis* 172
 Prosopography, 17–19, 50, 53, 56, 64, 68, 76–77, 79, 83, 136, 159, 242, 247
Protector, 166, 227–231, 239–240, 242, 245
 Provincial administration, 138, 140, 142, 156
 Provincial governor, 11, 42, 69, 137–142, 157, 164, 171, 174–175, 183, 188, 213, 217, 242, 251–252

- Quaestor*, 51, 56, 58, 61, 63, 91–92, 96–98, 102, 104–110, 112, 114, 118, 121–131, 198
Quattuor militiae, 135, 148
 Raetia, 29, 32, 137, 166, 194, 198, 201, 203, 205, 221, 231, 234–236
 Ravenna, 150, 166
 Rebellion, 39, 46, 57, 216, 218–220
Rector orientis, 181, 222
 Reforms, 1–2, 41–42, 49–51, 144, 166, 174, 184, 218, 235, 243, 246, 253
 Requisition, 145, 149, 156, 248
 Rhetoric, 9, 14, 45, 188, 209
 Rhine (area), 23, 29, 31–32, 138–139, 166, 168, 194, 207, 215–216, 219–221, 235
 Rome, 10–11, 13, 15, 22, 24–26, 31–32, 34–35, 38–40, 42, 44–45, 47, 51, 56, 60–63, 66, 68–70, 74, 77–80, 113, 115–118, 122, 126, 129, 133, 135, 146–147, 149–151, 154, 156–157, 161–162, 166–167, 169–170, 172–173, 177, 183, 186, 188–189, 195–196, 198, 200, 203–205, 213–214, 222, 226–230, 234, 242–243, 248–250
 Saepinum, 170, 173–174
 Sarmatae, 29–30, 89–90, 117, 129, 219
 Sassanids, 30, 165
 Secession, 33, 43, 46, 48, 232, 252
 Secretaries, imperial, 35, 135, 137, 145, 149–155, 157–158, 188, 190, 250
 Senatorial elite, 9, 14, 18–19, 45, 49–134, 139, 159, 183–184, 188, 190, 193, 197–198, 205, 215, 240, 247, 249–250, 253, 257
 Senatorial nucleus, 12, 19, 50, 64, 70–71, 73–81, 210, 249–250, 253
 Senatorial status, 25, 45, 78, 143, 158–159, 176–177, 180–185, 187, 190–191, 215, 224–225, 238, 243, 246, 249, 251, 254
 Senatorial support, 45, 214, 243–244
 Severan emperors, 14, 31, 39, 42, 151, 153, 175, 188, 224
 Severan era, 42, 66, 80, 138–139, 147, 161, 168–171, 173, 175, 182, 185, 190, 200
Sevir turmae deducendae equitum Romanorum, 61, 92, 112, 124, 127–128, 131
 Sirmium, 25–27, 40, 155, 166, 236
 Skaptopara, 37, 149
 Social mobility, 8, 72, 81, 250
 Social upstart, 9, 14, 141, 154, 158
 Sophist, 150, 155–156, 188–189, 250
 Status, achieved, 7, 47, 250
 Status, ascribed, 7–8, 47, 250
 Status dissonance, 9, 184
 Status group, 6–7, 9, 79
 Status profile, 9, 47, 81, 247, 249
 Strategic familial alliances, 71–73, 79–80, 250
Strategos, 133, 201, 231
 Successor, imperial, 2, 24, 27–30, 33, 40, 142, 162–163, 165, 232
 Supply system, 11, 145–146, 195, 211, 222, 226
 Supra-provincial command, 142–143
 Syria, 12, 23, 31–33, 39, 65, 68–69, 97, 110, 129, 138, 151, 164–165, 168, 196, 199, 205, 212–213, 224–225; Syria Coele 31, 68, 70, 109–110, 131–132, 199, 205, 208, 213; Syria Palaestina 137, 199, 206; Syria Phoenice 31, 199, 213, 222, 225
 Taxation, 69, 145, 156, 174–175, 248
 Tetrarchy, 21, 175
 Thessaly, 40, 233
 Third-century crisis, 2, 33, 68, 70
 Thracia, 23, 37, 39, 73, 94–95, 137, 141, 149, 161, 168, 181, 196, 214, 222, 230, 233
 Ticinum, 231, 236
Tres militiae, 135, 195
Tribunus cohortis, 167, 228

- Tribunus militum (legionis)*, 56, 68, 91, 93, 102, 106–107, 109–110, 120, 127, 129, 135, 141, 143, 147, 194, 197, 207, 222, 228, 231, 236
- Tribunus plebis*, 56, 91, 109–110, 125, 129, 203
- Triumph, 34, 38, 166, 224
- Triumvir capitalis*, 56, 61, 91–92, 124, 131
- Triumvir monetalis*, 67, 96, 106–107, 112, 114, 124
- Urban elites, 72–73
- Usurpation, 15, 31–33, 38–40, 45, 48, 59, 63, 129, 133, 216–217, 220, 226, 232, 235, 239, 242, 255
- Vassal kings, 199, 238, 241, 245
- Vexillatio*, 129, 142, 144, 166, 194, 196, 201–202, 207, 216–217, 230–231, 236, 239, 245
- Vice Caesaris* (also *vice principis; vice sacra*), 42, 59–60, 69, 92, 112, 115–116, 123, 132, 151, 153, 164, 171, 175–176, 183, 186–187, 252
- Vicinity, imperial, 176, 188, 195, 250
- Vigiles*, 166, 228, 230, 243
- Vigintivir*, 56, 58, 110
- Vigintivir ex senatus consulto rei publicae curandae*, 59, 64, 124, 126, 139, 153
- Vir militaris*, 24, 88, 164, 167–168, 183, 227
- Weber, M., 3, 6–8

INDEX OF ANCIENT PERSONS

Notes to the reader: persons are given by their *gentilicium*, where known; exceptions are authors, emperors, empresses, usurpers and a few others (Heraclianus, Papinianus, Paulus, Plautianus, Priscus, Seianus, Timesitheus, Ulpianus, Volusianus). Consulships or other distinguishing posts are added for the sake of clarity. Persons who occur in footnotes only are generally not included in this index. Authors are only included insofar as they occur in the main text; references in footnotes are usually not included in the index. Full names of emperors are only given for those emperors who reigned between AD 193 and 284.

- Acilii (Glabriones et Aviolae), *gens*
Acilia, 53, 65, 67, 71, 74–75, 83–
86, 103, 126
- Acilius Aviola, M., *cos ord* 239, 84–
85, 258
- Acilius Balbus Sabinus, M., *cos suff*
after 284, 85–86
- Acilius Clarus, *vir consularis*, 85–
86
- Acilius Faustinus, M., *cos ord* 210,
83–85, 257
- Acilius Glabrio, M(?), *cos II ord*
186, 83–85, 126
- Acilius Glabrio, M(?), *cos ord* 256,
54, 71, 83–85, 124, 126, 259
- Aedinius Iulianus, M., prefect under
Severus Alexander or Gordianus
III, 168, 265
- Aelius Aelianus, P., *protector*, 141,
143, 227, 229
- Aelius Antipater, *ab epistulis* under
Severus, 150
- Aelius Triccianus, *praefectus legionis*
II Parth under Caracalla, 166–
167
- Aemilianus, *cos II ord* 276, 54, 105,
259
- Aemilius Aemilianus, M., the
emperor, 25, 60, 255
- Aemilius Laetus, Q., prefect under
Commodus and Pertinax, 162,
263
- Aemilius Saturninus, Q., prefect
under Severus, 163, 168, 178, 263
- Alfenus Senecio, L., *legatus Britan-*
niae under Severus, 110, 208–209,
214
- Allius Albinus, C., *cos ord* 246, 89,
91
- Ammianus Marcellinus, the
historian, 52
- Anicii, *gens* Anicia, 53–54, 62–63,
65, 67, 69, 71, 74, 86–89
- Anicius Faustus, Q., *cos suff* 198,
68–69, 86–88
- Anicius Faustus, *cos II ord* 298, 87,
89
- Anicius Faustus Paulinus, (Q. or
Sex?), *cos suff* before 230, 69,
86–88
- Annia Faustina, the empress, 119–
120
- Antiochianus, prefect under
Elagabalus, 160, 164, 264

- Antoninus Pius, the emperor, 22, 67, 74, 90, 109, 129
- Asellius Aemilianus, ally of Pescennius Niger, 198, 262
- Asinius Lepidus Praetextatus, C., *cos ord* 242, 128, 130, 258
- Aspasius of Ravenna, orator, *ab epistulis*, 150
- Attalus, king of the Marcomanni, 219
- Aufidius Victorinus, C., *cos ord* 200, 53, 98–99, 257
- Augustus, the emperor, 11, 15, 18, 35, 37, 41, 47, 136, 149, 160, 166
- Aurelianus, L. Domitius, the emperor, 26–27, 29–30, 33, 38–40, 61–62, 114, 119–120, 133, 165, 181, 187, 231, 236–237, 255, 259–266
- Aurelius Iulianus, M., prefect under Severus, 147, 173
- Aurelius Sabinus Iulianus, M., prefect under Carus and Numerianus, 256, 267
- Aurelius Marcianus, *dux* under Gallienus, 141, 231, 233–234, 236–237
- Aurelius Theodotus, *dux* under Gallienus, 148, 222, 226
- Aurelius Victor, Sex., the historian, 15–16, 144, 205, 218, 235–236
- Aurelius Victor, M., *protector*, 227, 230
- Aurel(ius) Commodus Pompeianus, L., *cos ord* 209, 95–98, 107–108, 257
- Aureolus, usurper, *dux* under Gallienus, 161, 216–219, 221–222, 224, 231–232, 234–237, 239, 255
- Avidius Cassius, usurper, 22, 28, 129, 154
- Baebius Aurelius Iuncinus, L., *praefectus Aegypti* under Caracalla, 147
- Balbinus, Caelius Calvinus, D., the emperor, 15, 24, 85, 126, 255, 258
- Ballista, prefect under Macrianus minor and Quietus, 30, 148, 165, 222–226, 266
- Bruttii, *gens* Bruttia, 53–55, 65, 67, 71, 74–75, 89–91, 105, 128
- Bruttius Crispinus, C. (or L.?), *cos ord* 224, 89–90, 258
- Bruttius Praesens, *cos* early 2nd century, 90
- Bruttius Praesens, *cos suff* 153, *cos II ord* 180, 71, 89–90, 105
- Bruttius Praesens, C., *cos ord* 217, 89–90, 179, 258
- Bruttius Praesens, C., *cos ord* 246, 89–91, 258
- Br(u)ttius Praesens, *v.c.* late 3rd/early 4th cent., 90–91
- Bruttius Quintius Crispinus, L., *cos ord* 187, 89–90
- Caecina Tacitus, A., *cos ord?* 273, 181, 260
- Caesonii, *gens* Caesonia, 53–56, 60, 62–65, 67–68, 71, 74, 83, 87, 89, 91–93, 261
- Caesonius Bassus, *cos ord* 317, 62, 88, 93
- Caesonius Lucillus Macer Rufinianus, L., *cos suff* 225/230, 56, 58–60, 63–64, 92–93, 260–261
- Caesonius Macer Rufinianus, C., *cos suff* ca 197/198, 55–58, 91–92, 261
- Caesonius Ovinus Manlius Rufinianus Bassus, L., *cos suff* ca 260, 60–62, 92, 261
- Calpurnius Acilius Aviola, C., *cos suff* 24, 84
- Caracalla (M. Aurelius Antoninus), the emperor, 13, 23–24, 29–30, 34, 38–40, 57–58, 67, 88, 90, 95–96, 111, 120, 123, 125–126, 131, 133, 138, 142, 147, 150–153, 155, 158, 160–164, 166–167, 172, 178–179, 182, 201, 203, 206, 209–213, 215, 221, 236, 243, 255, 257–258, 264, 267

- Carinus, M. Aurelius, the emperor,
15, 27, 30, 43, 62, 87, 256, 259,
267
- Carus, M. Aurelius, the emperor,
27, 30, 38, 40, 43, 45, 62, 163,
165–166, 168–169, 179, 256, 259,
266–267
- Cassius Dio, L., the historian, 13–15,
36, 149, 258, 261
- Catii, *gens* Catia, 53–54, 65, 67, 69,
74, 93–95
- Catius Celer, L., *cos suff* ca 241, 69,
93–95, 133
- Catius Clemens, C., *cos suff* ca 235,
93–95
- Catius Clementinus Priscillianus, Sex.,
cos ord 230, 93–95, 131, 133, 258
- Catius? Lepidus I[—], *cos suff* ca
200, 93–95, 133
- Catius Sabinus, P., *cos II ord* 216,
93–95, 118, 258
- Cecropius/Ceronius, *dux* under
Gallienus, 231, 236–237
- Claudii Pompeiani, *gens* Claudia
Pompeiana, 53–54, 65–67, 74–75,
95–99, 108
- Claudii Severi, *gens* Claudia Severa,
53–54, 65–67, 74–75, 98–99
- Claudius (II Gothicus), M. Aurelius,
the emperor, 26–27, 29, 38, 40,
143, 162, 165, 216, 221–222, 231,
233–234, 236–237, 255, 259
- Claudius Aurelius Aristobulus,
T., prefect under Carinus and
Diocletian, 162, 267
- Claudius Aurelius Quintianus
(Pompeianus?), L. Ti., *cos ord* 235,
96–98, 258
- Claudius Claudianus, general under
Severus, 201–202, 206, 209, 214
- Claudius Iulianus, App., *cos II ord*
224, 89–90, 258, 260–261
- Claudius Pompeianus, Ti., *cos II* 173,
general under Marcus Aurelius,
66, 74, 85, 96–97, 99
- (Claudius) Pompeianus, (Ti.), *cos
suff* 212, 96–97
- Claudius Pompeianus, (Ti.), *cos ord*
231, 96–98, 258
- Claudius Pompeianus Quintianus,
quaestorius, 96–97
- Claudius Severus, *cos suff* 112, 99
- Claudius Severus, Cn., *cos II ord* 173,
66, 98–99
- (Claudius?) Severus, (Cn.), *cos suff*
212?, 54, 98–99
- Claudius Severus, Cn., *cos ord* 235,
96, 98–99, 258
- Claudius Severus, Ti., *v.c.* under
Diocletian, 99
- Claudius Severus Arabianus, *cos ord*
146, 99
- Claudius Severus Proculus, Ti., *cos
ord* 200, 98–99, 257
- (Clementius) Valerius Marcellinus,
protector, 143, 227, 229
- Clodius Albinus, D., usurper, 14, 23,
34, 57, 64, 122, 195–194, 200–
201, 207, 213, 255
- Clodius Pompeianus, *cos ord* 241,
96–98, 258
- Cocceius Anicius Faustus Flavianus,
M., *cos suff* ca 250/252, 68–69,
87–88
- Cocceius Anicius Faustus Paulinus,
Sex., *cos suff* before 260/268, 68,
87–88, 261
- Comazon, P. Valerius, *cos 'II' ord*
220, prefect under Elagabalus,
168, 179, 181, 258, 260, 264
- Commodus, the emperor, 1–2, 22,
53, 56–57, 85, 89–90, 97, 116–
117, 120, 129, 150, 160, 162, 168,
187, 195–198, 200, 203, 207–208,
211, 263
- Constantine, the emperor, 12, 42,
159, 171, 176, 182, 184, 254
- Cornelius Anullinus, P., *cos II ord*
199, 93, 95, 196, 198–200, 205,
257, 260–261
- Cornelius Octavianus, M., *dux*
under Valerianus, 142–143
- Cornelius Paternus, Cn., *cos ord* 233,
60, 124, 126, 258

- Cosmus, *a rationibus*, 173–174
- Decius, C. Messius Quintus, the emperor, 25–26, 29, 39, 60, 89, 128, 130, 142–143, 222, 255, 258, 260, 266
- Diadumenianus, M. Opellius, the emperor, 34, 172, 255
- Didius Iulianus (M. Didius Severus Iulianus), the emperor, 22, 31, 113, 115, 160, 162–163, 166–167, 196, 213, 255, 263
- Diocletian (C. Aurelius Valerius Diocletianus), the emperor, 1–2, 18, 21, 27, 40, 43, 48–51, 55, 62, 64, 85–86, 99, 162–163, 179, 181, 246, 253, 267
- Domitianus, *dux Aureoli*, 222, 224
- Domitius Dexter, C., *cos ord* 196, 123, 125, 257, 260
- Domitius Honoratus, L., prefect under Severus Alexander, 168, 265
- (Egnatia) Mariniana, the empress, wife of Valerianus, 72, 100–103, 108
- Egnatii, *gens* Egnatia, 25, 53, 65, 67, 69, 72, 74, 100–103, 112
- Egnatius Proculus, A., *cos suff* late 2nd/early 3rd cent.), 71, 100–101, 111
- Egnatius Proculus, Q., *cos suff* late 2nd/early 3rd cent.), 71, 100–101, 111–112
- Egnatius Victor, L., *cos suff* before 207, 69, 72, 100–103, 108
- Egnatius Victor Lollianus, L., *cos suff* ca 225/230, 69, 100–103, 108, 260, 262
- Egnatius Victor Marinianus, *cos suff* ca 230, 69, 100–103
- Elagabalus (M. Aurelius Antoninus), the emperor, 15, 23, 31, 38, 90, 93, 99, 105, 110–111, 119–120, 138–139, 152–153, 160–161, 164–165, 168, 173, 179, 203, 206, 211–212, 255, 264
- Eusebius of Caesarea, the historian, 16, 223
- Eutropius, the historian, 16
- Fabius Cilo, L., *cos ord* 204, 166, 172, 194–196, 199, 201–203, 205, 209, 214, 257, 260
- Festus, the historian, 16
- Flavianus, prefect under Severus Alexander, 164, 265
- Flavius Antiochianus, *cos II ord* 270, 120–121, 132, 134, 259
- Flavius Aper, L., prefect under Carus and Numerianus, 144, 162–163, 168
- Flavius Claudius Sulpicianus, *cos suff* ca 170, 66, 71, 122, 260
- Flavius Genialis, T., prefect under Didius Iulianus, 160, 163, 167, 263
- Flavius Iulius Latronianus, *cos* before 243, 118, 260
- Flavius Iuvenalis, prefect under Didius Iulianus and Severus, 162, 167, 263
- Flavius Postumius Titianus, *cos II ord* 301, 121–123
- Flavius Sallustius Palignianus, T., *cos ord* 231, 96, 98, 258
- Flavius Titianus, prefect of Egypt under Hadrianus, 71, 121–122
- Flavius Vitellius Seleucus, M., *cos ord* 221, 127, 129, 258
- Florianus, M. Annianus, the emperor, 27, 163, 255, 266
- Fronto, M. Cornelius, the author, 35, 99, 106, 121
- Fulvii Aemiliani, *gens* Fulvia Aemiliana, 53–54, 65, 67, 71, 74, 104–105, 114, 118
- Fulvius Gavius Numisius Aemilianus, L., *cos suff* 223/235, *cos II ord?* 249, 54, 104
- Fulvius Gavius Numisius Aemilianus, L., *cos ord* 244, 104, 117–118
- Fulvius Gavius Numisius Petronius Aemilianus, L., *praetor tutelarius* 169?, 104–105

- Fulvius Gavius (Numisius) Petronius Aemilianus, *cos ord* 206, 104–105
- Gallienus, P. Licinius Egnatius, the emperor, 9, 18–19, 25–26, 29, 32–34, 38, 40, 43, 45, 69, 72, 101–103, 115, 120, 139–144, 148, 157, 161–164, 168–169, 180–181, 184–186, 193, 203, 216–246, 253, 255, 259, 266–267
- Geminus Chrestus, prefect under Severus Alexander, 164, 168, 265
- Geta, P. Septimius, the emperor, 34, 150, 163, 172, 178, 209, 243, 255, 257
- Gordianus (I) Sempronianus, M. Antonius, the emperor, 24, 255, 261
- Gordianus (II) Sempronianus, the emperor, 24, 255
- Gordianus (III), M. Antonius, the emperor, 14, 24–25, 30, 34, 37, 39, 59–61, 84–85, 94–95, 97–98, 101, 103, 118, 126, 131, 138–139, 149, 152, 158, 162–165, 168, 171, 174, 180, 183, 206, 253, 255, 258, 265–266
- Hadrianus, the emperor, 14, 16, 22, 28, 71, 74, 90, 122, 135, 150, 154, 164
- Hedii Lolliani, *gens Hedia Lolliana*, 53–54, 65, 67–68, 71–72, 74, 89, 98, 103, 106–108, 120
- (Hedius) Lollianus Plautius Avitus, Q., *cos ord* 209, 68, 72, 87, 95, 100, 106–108, 257, 262
- (Hedius Rufus) Lollianus Avitus, L., *cos suff* 114, 106–107
- Hedius Rufus Lollianus Avitus, L., *cos ord* 144, 106–107
- Hedius Rufus Lollianus Gentianus, Q., *cos suff* 186/188, 68, 106–108, 196–197, 202, 205, 209, 214, 262
- (Hedius Lollianus) Terentius Gentianus, *cos ord* 211, 72, 100, 106–108, 119–120, 257
- Heraclianus, Aurelius, prefect under Gallienus, 161–162, 181, 231–234, 236–237, 266
- Herennius Dexippus, P., the historian, local strongman in Athens, 231, 233, 240
- Herennius Modestinus, jurist, *a libellis* 223?, 152–153
- Herodianus, the historian, 13–15, 178, 202
- Ingenuus, usurper, 216–220, 222, 238, 255
- Iotapianus, usurper, 39, 255
- Iulia Domna, the empress, 23, 147, 163, 182, 195, 205, 243
- Iulianus Nestor, prefect under Macrinus, 164–165, 167, 264
- Iulius Asper, C., *cos II ord* 212, 88, 257, 260–262
- Iulius Avitus Alexianus, C., *cos suff* ca 200, brother-in-law of Iulia Domna, 194–195, 201, 203, 205, 208–210, 214, 262
- Iulius Basilianus, prefect under Macrinus, 168, 264
- Iulius Laetus, *dux* under Severus, 194–195, 199–202, 204, 206, 215, 244
- Iulius Philippus, M., son of Philippus Arabs, the emperor, 34, 258
- Iulius Placidianus, prefect under Aurelianus, 165–166, 168–169, 181, 187, 259, 266
- Iulius Pollienus Auspex, Ti., *cos suff* 212/222, 70, 116–118
- Iulius Septimius Castinus, *dux* under Severus, 194, 207, 211–213
- Iunius Faustinus Placidus Postumianus, *comes* of Severus, *cos suff* ca 204/205, 201, 203–204, 206–210, 214
- (Iunius) Veldumnianus, *cos ord* 272, 122, 259
- Iustinianus I, the emperor, 16, 170
- Laelianus, Ulpus Cornelius, usurper in Gallic empire, 235, 256
- Laelius (Fulvius?) Maximinus Aemilianus, M., *cos ord* 227, 54, 105, 113, 115, 258

- Licinii, *gens* Licinia, 72, 227
 (Licinius Egnatius) Marinianus, *cos ord* 268, 34, 102, 259
- Licinius Rufinus, Cn., jurist, 153, 190, 251
- Lucilla, the empress, 96–97
- Lucius Verus, the emperor, 22, 43, 97, 105, 129, 154, 200
- Macrianus maior, T. Fulvius, *prae-positus annonae* of Valerianus, 147–148, 222–223, 225
- Macrianus minor, T. Fulvius Iunius, usurper, 148, 223, 225, 255, 266
- Macrinus, M. Opellius, the emperor, 23, 30, 39, 88, 147, 155, 160–162, 164–167, 172, 179, 184–185, 212, 246, 255, 258, 261
- Maecenas, 37, 149, 166, 174
- Maecius Gordianus, relative (prefect?) of Gordianus III, 163
- Maecius Laetus, Q., prefect under Severus, *cos II' ord* 215, 163, 168, 258, 268
- Manilius Fuscus, Ti., *cos II ord* 225, 56, 92, 258, 262
- Manilia Lucilla, wife of Caesonius Macer Rufinianus, 56, 58, 92
- Marcus Claudius Agrippa, *ab epistulis* of Caracalla, 154–155
- Marcus Aurelius, the emperor, 2, 22, 29, 35, 40, 43, 51, 56, 64–67, 74, 78, 89–90, 96–99, 116–117, 129, 146, 151, 155–156, 170, 189, 197, 203, 208, 246
- Marii, *gens* Maria, 53–54, 65, 67–68, 74–75, 103, 109–112, 133
- Marius Maximus, L., *cos ord* 232, 110–111, 131, 133, 258
- Marius Maximus Perpetuus Aurelianus, L. (= Marius Maximus), the biographer, *dux* under Severus, *cos II ord* 223, 15, 68, 74, 110–111, 194, 196–198, 201–202, 205–206, 210, 212–213, 258, 260–262
- Marius Perpetuus, L., *cos suff* ca 203, 68, 72, 101, 109–111, 206, 261
- Marius Perpetuus, L., *cos ord* 237, 72, 101, 110–112, 258
- Maximinus (Thrax), C. Iulius Verus, the emperor, 25, 28, 40, 47, 59, 112, 246, 253, 265
- Memor, usurper, 222, 226, 255
- Messius Extricatus, T., *cos ord* 217, 89–90, 161, 178–179, 258
- Mummius Bassus, *cos ord* 258, 112, 114–115, 259
- Mummius Felix Cornelianus, L., *cos ord* 237, 111, 115, 258
- Mummius Maximus Faustianus, L., *v.c. et patricius*, 112, 115
- Munatius Sulla Cerialis, M., *cos ord* 215, 179, 258
- Mussius Aemilianus, usurper, 148, 222, 226, 255
- Naevius Aquilinus, L., *cos ord* 249, 105, 258, 261
- Numerianus, M. Aurelius Numerius, the emperor, 14, 27, 39, 43, 62, 163, 256, 259, 267
- Nummii, *gens* Nummia, 53–54, 65, 67, 74, 104–105, 112–115
- Nummius Albinus, M. (= M. Nummius Attidius Senecio Albinus), *cos II ord* 263, 113–115, 259–260
- Nummius Faus(t)ianus, *cos ord* 262, 54, 115, 159
- Nummius Senecio Albinus, M., *cos ord* 227, 113–115, 258
- Nummius Tuscus, M., *cos ord* 258, 113–115, 259
- Nummius Tuscus, *cos ord* 295, 114–115
- Nummius Umbrius Primus Senecio Albinus, M., *cos ord* 206, 104–105, 111–114, 257, 262
- Oclatinus Adventus, M., prefect under Caracalla, 23, 111, 160–161, 164, 167, 179, 208–209, 212, 214, 246, 258, 260, 264

- Octavius Appius Suetrius Sabinus, C., *cos ord* 214, 123, 125–126, 258, 261
- Ovinii, *gens* Ovinia, 60, 92
- Papinianus, Aemilius, jurist, prefect under Severus and Caracalla, 151–152, 160, 163 171–172, 264
- Paulinus, *cos ord* 277, 54, 87, 89
- Paulus, Iulius, jurist, 66, 151–153
- Perennis, Sex. Tigidius, prefect under Commodus, 187
- Pertinax, P. Helvius, the emperor, 2, 22–23, 31, 33, 51, 66, 71, 85, 106–107, 122, 154, 156, 162, 189, 213, 255, 257, 263
- Pescennius Niger, C., emperor in east, 22, 31, 39, 108, 146, 152, 196–199, 213–214, 245, 255
- Petronius, the author, 9
- Philippus Arabs, M. Iulius, the emperor, 25, 29, 37–39, 42–43, 60–61, 124, 142, 148–149, 162–164, 184, 228, 255, 265–266
- Philostratus, L. Flavius, biographer of sophists, 150, 155
- Pinarius Valens, prefect under Pupienus, 163
- Piso (Frugi), usurper, 226–227, 238, 255
- Plautianus, C. Fulvius, prefect under Severus, 88, 147, 160, 162–163, 172, 178–180, 182, 205–206, 257, 263
- Plinius Minor, C., the author, 78, 90, 170
- Plotinus, the philosopher, 157
- Pollenius Armenius Peregrinus, Ti., *cos ord* 244, 55, 70, 104–105, 117–118, 258
- Pollieni, *gens* Polliena, 53, 65, 67, 69, 74, 116–118
- Pollienius Auspex maior, (Ti.?), *cos suff* 170/175, 54, 116–117, 211, 261
- Pollienius Auspex minor, (Ti.?), *cos suff* ca 185, 70, 116–118
- Pomponii, *gens* Pomponia, 53–54, 65, 67, 74, 118–121, 134
- Pomponia Ummidia, wife of Fl. Antiochianus, 120, 134
- (Pomponius) Bassus, *cos ord* 211, 107–108, 119–120, 257, 259
- Pomponius Bassus . . . stus, (Ti./F.), *cos* 245/50 or 259, 54–55, 119–120, 259–260
- Pomponius Bassus Terentianus, C., *cos suff* ca 193, 107, 118–120
- Postumii, *gens* Postumia, 53–54, 65–67, 71, 74, 121–123
- Postumius Festus, M., *cos suff* 160, 71, 121–122
- Postumius Quietus, (T. Fl.), *cos ord* 272, 121–122, 259
- Postumius Suagr(i)us, *cos suff* before 275, 122–123
- Postumius Varus, (T. Fl.), *cos suff* 250, 70, 120–122, 260
- Postumus, (M. Cassianus Latianius Postumus), emperor of the Gallic empire, 32–34, 40, 216, 220–221, 235, 238, 256
- Priscus, C. Iulius, brother of Philippus Arabs, 25, 43, 142–143, 163–165, 168–169, 180, 186, 190, 246, 251, 265
- Probus, commander under Severus, 199–200
- Probus, M. Aurelius, the emperor, 27, 29, 38, 40, 61–62, 87, 89, 132–133, 140–141, 165–166, 168, 221, 229, 236
- Pupienus Maximus, M. Clodius, the emperor, 24, 85, 124, 126, 163, 255, 258, 260, 262
- Quietus, usurper, 32, 148, 223–226, 255, 266
- Quintillus, M. Aurelius Claudius, the emperor, 26, 38, 255
- Ragonii, *gens* Ragonia, 53
- Regalianus, usurper, 216, 218–219, 222, 238, 255

- Roscius Aelianus Paculus Salvius Iulianus, L., *cos ord* 223, 109, 111, 113, 258
- Rossius Vitulus, M., *praepositus* under Severus, 146
- Sabinianus, usurper, 59, 255, 261
- Saloninus Valerianus, P. (Licinius) Cornelius, the emperor, son of Gallienus, 32, 34, 163, 220, 228
- Seianus, L. Aelius, prefect under Tiberius, 170, 177–178, 182, 187
- Septimius Geta, P., *cos II ord* 203, 178, 194, 201–202, 257
- Septimius Odaenathus, *exarchos* of Palmyra, 30, 32–33, 70, 222, 224–226, 231–232, 238, 240, 256
- Septimius Severus, C., *cos suff* 160, 200
- Septimius Severus, L., the emperor, 18–19, 22–24, 30–31, 34, 36–39, 42, 45, 51–52, 57, 64, 68–70, 73–75, 78, 83, 88, 90, 108, 111, 113, 115–116, 118, 120, 125, 129, 131–133, 137–138, 140, 142, 145–147, 150–151, 153–155, 158, 160–163, 166–167, 170, 172–174, 176, 178, 180, 182, 185, 188, 193–215, 240–246, 251, 253, 255, 257, 263–264
- Severus Alexander (M. Aurelius Alexander), the emperor, 14, 23–25, 29–30, 39, 47, 58–60, 69–70, 97, 102, 104–105, 108, 111, 116–118, 126, 131, 138–139, 142–143, 145–146, 149, 152, 160, 164–165, 168, 171, 173, 179–180, 183, 210, 255, 258, 261, 265, 267
- Sextius Magius Lateranus, T., *cos ord* 197, 199–200, 204–205, 209, 257
- Shapur I, Persian ruler, 30, 32, 151, 165
- Silvanus, tutor of Saloninus, 32, 163, 220, 267
- Successianus, prefect under Valerianus, 161, 165, 168–169, 266
- Tacitus, M. Claudius, the emperor, 26–27, 29, 61, 163, 255, 259, 266
- Terentius Marcianus, *praeses* under Probus, 140–141
- Tiberius, the emperor, 74, 170, 177, 187
- Timesitheus, C. Furius Sabinus Aquila, prefect under Gordianus III, 24, 34, 138–139, 163–165, 168–169, 180, 190, 246, 251, 253, 265
- Tineius Sacerdos, Q., *cos II ord* 219, 210, 258, 262
- Traianus, the emperor, 15, 22, 28, 40, 65, 74, 150, 154, 200, 218
- Traianus Mucianus, *protector*, 227, 230–231
- Trebonianus Gallus, C. Vibius, the emperor, 25, 38, 60, 122–123, 126, 255, 259
- Triarius Rufinus, A., *cos ord* 210, 83, 85, 257
- Trimalchio, social upstart in *Satyricon*, 9–10
- Tullius Crispinus, prefect under Didius Iulianus, 163, 166–167, 263
- Ulpianus, Domitius, jurist, prefect under Severus Alexander, 42, 151–153, 164, 170–173, 265
- Ulpianus, prefect under Macrinus, 164–165, 167, 264
- Umbrius Primus, M., *cos suff* ca 185/186, 113–114, 261
- Vaballathus, son of Odaenathus, 33, 226, 231–232, 256
- Valens, military commander under Gallienus, 222, 226–227, 238, 255
- Valerianus, P. Licinius, the emperor, 9, 25–26, 30, 32, 34, 38–39, 43, 60, 69, 72–73, 101–103, 108, 114–115, 126, 147–148, 151, 161, 164–165, 168, 216–218, 222–224, 227–228, 238, 245, 255, 259, 266–267

- Valerianus II, probably son of Gallienus, 34, 217
- Valerii, *gens* Valeria, 53–54, 65, 67, 71, 74–75, 85, 123–127, 130
- Valerius Claud(ius) Acilius Priscil(l)ianus Maximus, L. (= Valerius Maximus), *cos ord* 233, *cos II ord* 256, 71, 84–85, 123–124, 126–127, 139, 258–260
- Valerius Marcellinus, (Clementius), *protector*, 143, 227, 229
- (Valerius) Messal(l)a, (L.), *cos ord* 280, 124–125, 259
- Valerius Messal(l)a Apollinaris, L., *cos ord* 214, 123–126, 139, 258, 262
- Valerius Messalla Thrasea Priscus, L., *cos ord* 196, 123, 125, 257
- Valerius Patruinus, prefect under Caracalla, 164, 172, 267
- Valerius Poplicola, republican consul, 125–126
- Valerius Poplicola Balbinus Maximus, L., *cos ord* 253, 124–127, 259
- Valerius Pudens, C., *procos Afr* 209/212, 208, 261
- Valerius Valerianus, commander under Severus, 194–196, 198–200, 206, 210, 214
- Varius Clemens, *ab epistulis* under Marcus Aurelius, 154, 156
- Vespasianus, the emperor, 22, 51
- Vettii, *gens* Vettia, 53–54, 65, 67, 74, 127–130
- Vettius Gratus, (C.), *cos ord* 250, 128, 130, 258
- (Vettius) Gratus, (C.), *cos ord* 280, 125, 127–128, 259
- Vettius Gratus Atticus Sabinianus, C., *cos ord* 242, 127–130, 258
- Vettius Gratus Sabinianus, C., *cos ord* 221, 127–129, 258
- Vettius Sabinianus Iulius Hospes, *cos suff* ca 175/176), 127, 129–130, 261
- Virii, *gens* Viria, 53–54, 65, 67, 74, 112, 130–134
- Virius Agricola, L., *cos ord* 230, 94, 131–133, 258
- Virius Lupus, (L.?), *cos suff* before 196/197, 74, 130, 132–133, 201, 207–208, 213
- Vir(i)us Lupus, *cos (II) ord* 278, 70, 131–133, 259–260
- Virius Lupus (Iulianus?), L., *cos ord* 232, 110–111, 131–133, 258
- Virius Orfitus, (L.), *cos ord* 270, 132, 134, 259–260
- Volusianus, C. Vibius, the emperor, son of Trebonianus Gallus, 124, 126, 259
- Volusianus, L. Petronius Taurus, prefect under Gallienus, 161, 168–169, 181, 183–184, 186, 227–229, 232, 234, 237, 259–260, 266
- Xiphilinus, the historian, 13
- Zenobia, wife of Odaenathus, 33, 231–232, 256
- Zonaras, the historian, 13, 16, 26, 168, 235–236
- Zosimus, the historian, 16, 59, 140, 149, 160–161, 235–236