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A DOZEN EARLY PRIESTHOODS

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I. Priesthoods declare high birth or reward success. Hence guidance for investigating the social and political history of the governing order. From the Republic the Caesars inherited the *quattuor amplissima sacerdotia*, as they were styled: namely *pontifices*, *augures*, *quindecimviri sacris faciundis*, *septemviri epulonum*. Close to them in rank came a new college, the *sodales Augustales*, produced in sequel to the consecration of Caesar Augustus: *e primoribus civitatis viginti et unus*.¹

The autocrat had designed comparable esteem for the Arval Brethren whom he revived (or rather in large measure invented) when parading as a new Romulus in 29 BC. His reign shows *arvales* restricted to *nobiles* or ex-consuls, with a solitary exception. After a time recruitment broadened, and it began to betray a decline in quality towards the end of Nero's reign. Then the Flavian emperors devised a modest function for the fraternity, with membership open soon after the age of thirty to senators for whom neither extraction nor talent held out clear prospects of a consulship.²

Finally, *fetiales* and *sodales Titii*, not evoking or deserving much attention. Yet *fetiales* will turn out useful for detrimental comparison with those who achieved the eminent *sacerdotia*.³

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¹ Tacitus, Ann. I 54,1.

² W. Eck, *Senatoren von Vespasian bis Hadrian*, 1970, 30 ff.; R. Syme, *Some Arval Brethren*, 1980, 35 ff.; 80 ff.

³ For priesthoods under the first dynasty see M.H. Lewis, *The official Priests of Rome under the Julio-Claudians*, 1955; J. Scheid, ANRW II 16.1, 1978, 610 ff. For the four major *sacerdotia* from 96 to 235, L. Schumacher, *ib.* 655 ff., usefully resuming the matter of his *Prosopographische Untersuchungen etc.*, Diss. Mainz 1973.

II. When the aristocratic monarchy arrived, privilege at once asserted its hereditary rights. The young sons of noblemen duly benefit, and especially patricians. Thus Valerii, Fabii, Aemilii. In 21 BC Messallinus, the elder son of Corvinus, joined the *quindecimviri*, custodians of the sacred books of the Sibyl, as a poem of Tibullus attests (II 5). Consul in 3 BC, Messallinus was born in 36, so one assumes. Therefore co-opted when he put on the toga of manhood. In like fashion Persicus (cos. AD 34), the son of Fabius Maximus. In June of 15 the boy became an *arvalis*, occupying the place of the parent who died in the previous summer (AE 1947, 52). Third, Paullus Aemilius Lepidus, to be identified as a late-born son of Paullus the censor and the younger Marcella (left a widow by the decease of Messalla Appianus in 12 BC).⁴ The dedication at Saguntum shows him quaestor to Tiberius Caesar (ILS 949). That is, in the year 15 at the earliest. At the head stands *XVvir sacris faciundis*. That distinction may have accrued well before his quaestorship.⁵

From three members of the aristocratic nexus built up by Caesar Augustus, it is a far call to the theme of the present enquiry which belongs subsequent to the end of the dynasty and the passing of the ancient houses. It concerns the period from Hadrian to Severus, and it discusses a dozen inscriptions that register a senator's accession to one of the *quattuor amplissima sacerdotia* at a fairly early stage in his career. Some cases are disallowed on various grounds, others will be accepted and justified.

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⁴ For the vexed problem of identity, *The Augustan Aristocracy*, 1986, 147 ff.

⁵ For pre-quaestorian priesthoods in patricians of the new imperial aristocracy it will be suitable to adduce Q. Volusius Saturninus, the consul of 92 (AE 1972, 176) and D. Valerius Asiaticus, suffect in 94 (CIL XIV 4240).

III. Prolegomena cannot be avoided.⁶ In the shortest formulation of a consular's titles, the priesthood adheres to name and consulship; and a proconsulate (Asia or Africa) may be added. Thus *Cn. Calpurnius Cn. f. Piso / cos. pontifex procos.* (IRT 520: Lepcis). In consonance therewith, that type of titulature normally stands at the head of the expanded epigraphic texts that set forth a whole sequence of posts, whether rendered in ascending or in descending order. They begin to become numerous under the second dynasty.

Bafflement therefore confronts an earnest enquirer when he seeks to determine the season in which the distinction was conferred. Recourse is had to sundry arguments based either on social prestige or on merit gained in the service of Caesar. In the latter case, regularities can be divined, notably one of the superior *sacerdotia* coming just before or just after the predictable consulate of a successful *novus homo* (see below).

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IV. To the significance inherent in any priesthood as a portion of the titulature there is a valid corollary. If a senator has not got as far as the consulate, it stands at the top, next to the name, as the highest distinction (more important than a praetorship). Thus Plautius Pulcher as *augur* (ILS 964), or Caesennius Sospes as *fetialis* (1017). A number of other instances can be cited.⁷

Neglect of this feature can have unfortunate results. The inscription of Minicius Fundanus (suff. 107), found at Sipovo in Bosnia was incautiously taken to show him consular governor of Dalmatia.⁸ On

⁶ And an epilogue will adumbrate certain emergent themes of general interest.

⁷ For example ILS 916; 1029 (the younger Minicius Natalis; cf. below); 1051 (Aburnius Valens, cf. below); 1106; 1150; AE 1939, 59; 1956, 227.

⁸ Reproduced in Tacitus, 1958, 801 n. 3. Cf. now PIR² M 612: *fortasse iure concluditur.*

the contrary, the priesthood (he was *VIIvir epulonum*) which follows the name and precedes posts in ascending order, should indicate a legate of praetorian rank. Several of them happen to be discoverable a few years earlier, between 95 and 100.⁹

* * *

V. To continue the search. By good fortune, sporadic texts lodge a priesthood where it belongs in the *cursus*. Valerius Festus (suff. 71), already *sodalis Augustalis* after his praetorship, becomes *pontifex* when ex-consul (ILS 989); Iulius Celsus (suff. 92) is *quindecimvir* between the governorship of Cilicia and a consular post (8971); and Terentius Gentianus (suff. 116) is *pontifex* between consulate and governorship, in 120, of Macedonia (1046).

The case of Larcus Priscus (suff. 110) is helpful. After holding Numidia he is *VIIvir epulonum, cos. desig.* (1055). As the career of Julius Agricola (suff. 77) exemplified, a legionary command followed by a praetorian province in the portion of Caesar normally foretells a consulship (Agr. 9.1), with one of the superior priesthoods either before or soon after (9.6). Q. Atilius Agricola, coming from Belgica to a consulship late in 97 is then a *septemvir* (1021).

Perplexity arises when two priesthoods are bunched together at the head of a text. Which was the earlier to be attained? One thing is certain. The higher in rank demands priority in placing. For exact parallel, the two types of proconsulates in a career: *Asiae et Hispaniae Baeticae* (8970, cf. 1027).

No trouble therefore when one of the two is patently inferior. Thus Julius Proculus (suff. 109): *cos., XVvir / sacris faciundis, fetiali* (1040). A senator often became a *fetialis* at a quite early stage. Thus Pactumeius Clemens (suff. 138) after the tribunate of the plebs (1067).¹⁰ Si-

⁹ W. Eck, *Chiron* 13, 1983, 279, cf. 194; B.E. Thomasson, *Laterculi Praesidum I*, 1984, 92.

¹⁰ For parallel observe a pre-quaestorian *sodalis Titius* (ILS 1003).

milarly, to be assumed without discomfort, Caesennius Sospes, who was the son of a prominent consular (1017). Again Domitius Tullus (suff. c. 77). His inscription was set up after his proconsulate in Africa. As supplemented, it carries for priesthood only [*cos., procos. Africae] fetiali* (991). He should have been credited (like his older brother) with one of the *quattuor amplissima*.¹¹

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VI. It is another matter, when to one of those four is joined *sod. Aug.*, which came close to parity. Thus in an instance of early date: the enigmatic consular whose nomenclature ended with *Favonius* (ILS 9483).¹² After *cos., procos. Asiae* follow *XVvir s. f.* and *sod. Aug.* The same pair occurs on the Dalmatian inscription of Ducenius Geminus, consul suffect in 61 or 62 (9484). This priesthood might by luck or favour be acquired after the praetorship, as by Valerius Festus (989, cf. above). Or even before it, as by the polyonymous Roscius Maecius Celer (suff. c. 135), who had been quaestor to the Emperor Hadrian (8972). Others might have to wait for consular rank.

Nor indeed would *sod. Aug.* be disdained by a consular who already held one of the four superior sacerdotia. After his second consulship in 103, Atilius Agricola (suff. 97) parades as a *sodalis Augustalis* (1021a). Indeed, some magnates endowed with long survival might accumulate membership in several sodalitates.¹³

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¹¹ Domitius Lucanus was a *septemvir* (ILS 990).

¹² For a conjecture about the identity of Favonius, ZPE 53, 1983, 197 ff. = Roman Papers IV, 1988, 355 ff. Perhaps Lucilius Longus (suff. 7).

¹³ Notably Fabricius Veiento, *cos. tertio* in 83 (ILS 1010); and Pompeius Silvanus (II suff.? 76), cf. on AE 1952, 168 (Arelate), W. Eck, ZPE 9, 1972, 259 ff. Each in addition to *XVvir* and *sod. Aug.* - and two of them for Veiento.

VII. Perplexity sharpens when *sod. Aug.* follows one of the superior four, not at the head of a *cursus* but some way down, in the body of the text. Without that vexation, enough problems infested the inscription of P. Calvisius Ruso Julius Frontinus, legate (?104/7) of Cappadocia-Galatia (AE 1914, 247: Pisidian Antioch). Universally assumed the consul suffect of 79 (cf. PIR² C 350), he has only recently been disjoined.¹⁴ Not that consensus has emerged about identity and consular year.¹⁵

For present purposes what matters is *Js. f., sodali Augustali* (line 6), after consulate and a consular post. Now Ruso Frontinus was both son of a consul and a patrician. It is therefore likely enough that the order in rank in fact corresponds to the order in time. In any event, the placing presumably indicates the point at which the second honour accrued.¹⁶

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VIII. In allowing for peculiarities or errors, much may depend on who composed the text and under what form of authority. The inscription of Ruso Frontinus inspires confidence. It belongs to an official monument, and it also commemorates members of the governor's family.

Elsewhere private persons or even a local senate might have been in doubt as to where a priesthood should be entered on the text. One remedy was to put it at the end. Thus Brixia with the two priesthoods of Lentulus Scipio, consul suffect in 24 (940); and an equestrian officer for those of Aemilius Carus (suff.? 144) in the late years of Antoninus Pius (1077).

By the same token, the hazard of misplacements. The present en-

¹⁴ ZPE 56, 1984, 173 ff. = Roman Papers IV, 1988, 397 ff.

¹⁵ See now G. di Vita-Évrard, MEFRA 99, 1987, 281 ff.

¹⁶ By mishap, the two priesthoods were assigned to a single year, viz. 100, by Di Vita-Évrard, o.c. 301.

quiry inspects a dozen holders of the quattuor *amplissima*. Some early entrances are to be rejected. The list sets off with three young senators who admit no hesitation of any kind.

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IX. (1) L. Minicius Natalis Quadronius Verus (suff. 139). ILS 1061 (Barcino): his full *cursus*, beginning with *cos., procos. prov. Africae, auguri*. But observe, subjoined to that of his father, *augur, trib. plebis desig., q. Aug.*, etc. (1029). Close dating issues from a precious detail: when quaestor to Hadrian, Natalis served *eodem tempore* as legate to the parent, proconsul in Africa.

What happened is clear. When in the spring of 121 the Emperor departed on a journey to the western provinces, he could dispense with his quaestor (although not with the secretary *ab epistulis*, Suetonius Tranquillus). Natalis went to join the parent (suff. 106), whose tenure in Africa should be assigned to 121/2, matching Licinius Silvanus in Asia (his consular colleague).

The father, holding Pannonia Superior in 117, had been prominent among the partisans of the new ruler.¹⁷ Not, however, to achieve for reward a second consulship as did Catilius Severus (suff. 110), Hadrian's first governor of Syria. And he had to rest content with *sod. Aug.*

Nor did the son respond later on to his youthful promise and ambitions. He had in fact chosen to be a military tribune in three legions (all Danubian, c. 114/17): unique in a *laticlavus*, with for sole precedent Hadrian himself (95/8).

Reasons for retardation might have lain in his own tastes and pastimes. In 129, when an ex-praetor, Natalis is discovered as victor

¹⁷ He had been in Pannonia since 112. See the new diploma, M.M. Roxan, RMD 1978-1984 (1985), no. 90.

in a horse race at Olympia.¹⁸

Natalis did not accede to the *fasces* until a decade had elapsed, preceded by a year by Pactumeius Clemens (suff. 138). In contrast to the youthful augur, Pactumeius, a close coeval in the season of his quaestorship, had become merely a *fetialis* between tribune and praetor (1067: Cirta).

(2) L. Fulvius C.f. Aburnius Valens. ILS 1051 (Rome). At the head stands *pontifici*. Then *praefect. urbi feriarum Latinar.*, specified as held when Hadrian was consul for the second time (in 118). Three items follow identical with those in the *cursus* of Minicius Natalis (1029, cf. 1061), viz. a *triumvir monetalis* (the highest post in the vigintivirate), quaestor to Caesar, tribune of the plebs designate.

The abnormal cumulation of distinctions advertised social prestige and eminent favour. Curiosity was not assuaged when in 1932 a piece of the *Fasti Ostienses* disclosed his father, C. Aburnius Valens, consul suffect in 109.

The young senator, quaestor c. 125 and to be presumed consul c. 138, ended as a famous jurist, whom the *Historia Augusta* names among the five counsellors of the next emperor (Pius 12.1). Sundry problems will entail a separate treatment.¹⁹

(3) The polyonymous *Velleius P.f. Trom.*, etc. (AE 1972, 578: Ephesus). The fragmentary bilingual brings up a young member of the *ordo senatorius* who was *pontifex* and *monetalis*. Further, equipped with a lictor for attendant. He carries five other *gentilicia*. One of the items is startling: *Pedanius Fuscus Salinator*.

It attests a link with the dynasty. Cn. Pedanius Fuscus Salinator shared the *fasces* with Hadrian in 118. A dozen years previously he had annexed for wife Julia, the daughter of Julius Servianus (suff. 90)

¹⁸ SIG³ 840. For his interest in a variety of religious cults, see the elegant account of Groag, RE 15, 1842.

¹⁹ See *The Jurists Approved by Antoninus Pius*, forthcoming.

and niece to Hadrian.

The illustrious pair are on scant mention anywhere, and they soon faded out.²⁰ There is no call to suspect a dynastic contretemps that was covered up and lost to history.²¹ Rather pestilence in the train of warfare in the orient.

They left a son, 'foredoomed to splendour and sorrow'. Young Fuscus Salinator perished along with the nonagenarian grandfather when Hadrian, constrained at the age of sixty to give thought to the succession, turned against his kinsfolk and chose Ceionius Commodus (cos. 136).²²

The youth whom Ephesus honoured has been accorded identity as 'Hadrian's heir'.²³ The notion was attractive, but it has failed to enlist much attention, for or against.

One fact told against, namely *Velleius P.f. Trom.*, the first item in the nomenclature. Polyonymous senators are notoriously difficult to assess. In the search for a man's 'real name' (i.e. paternal), several clues avail.²⁴ One of them cannot be faulted. It is the *gentilicium* to which adhere filiation and tribe. Thus C. Calpetanus Rantius Quirinalis Valerius P.f. Pomp. Festus, the consul suffect of 71 (ILS 989).²⁵

No private action, such as 'testamentary adoption', can change the tribe. The Pedanii derive from Barcino in Tarraconensis, which was enrolled in *Galeria*.

²⁰ Being not anywhere on named record, Julia earned no entry in PIR; and her husband is named only in three letters of Pliny.

²¹ Compare the meagre testimony to L. Aemilius Paullus (cos. AD 1), the husband of the younger Julia (PIR² A 391).

²² Detail and problems in these transactions may be waived.

²³ E. Champlin, ZPE 30, 1978, 79 ff.

²⁴ *Epigrafia e ordine senatorio I*, 1982, 397 ff. = Roman Papers IV, 1988, 159 ff.

²⁵ Festus is patently from Arretium (*in Pomptina*), cf., under long neglect, CIL XI 1863 f. Cited in *Danubian Papers*, 1971, 181 (on legates of Pannonia).

In this context, passing reference will not omit the enigmatic *polyonymus* honoured at Doclea in the province Dalmatia: Cn. Sertorius C.f. Brocchus Aquilius Agricola Pedanius Fuscus Julius Servianus (CIL III 13826).²⁶ *L. Sertorius* is the second name on the Ephesian inscription.²⁷

(4) *Ignotus*. ILS 1039 (Pisidian Antioch). Setting out from the governorship of Galatia, the truncated stone presents the career in descending order, with *XV*vir. *sac. f.* before tribunate of the plebs and governorship. Antioch happens to yield four other senatorial *cursus* between 90 and 120.²⁸ In none of them has a derangement been so far proved.

Nevertheless, that priesthood for an ex-quaestor arouses disquiet. Admissible for a young man of high birth, to be sure. But an aristocrat is not likely to have a career or a province of this type. Nor can the Parthian War of Trajan (114-7) be invoked, which before its end manifested some peculiar signs of personal favour (such as Terentius Gentianus, consul before thirty). The *Ignotus*, praetor before the death of Trajan, had been legate of I Minervia in Germania Inferior.

The solution is easy, to concede a misplacement.²⁹ *Ignotus*, legionary legate and then governing a province like Galatia, was in good posture both for a consulship and for a priesthood. The item should have stood at the head, after his name (whether or not accompanying *cos.* or *cos. des.*).

Identity remains a problem, and it concerns the severance of Gala-

²⁶ Discussed briefly in *Historia* 17, 1968, 89 = *Roman Papers* II, 1979, 677.

²⁷ Champlin 'inclines to identify' the two young men (o.c. 88).

²⁸ Viz. Antistius Rusticus (AE 1925, 126); Caesennius Sospes (ILS 1017); Ruso Frontinus (AE 1914, 247); the polyonymous Gallus (ILS 1038). Relevant to the interpretation of Ruso's career, cf. above.

²⁹ None the less, co-optation when of quaestorian rank was accepted by L. Schumacher, *Prosopographische Untersuchungen*, etc., 1973, 73.

tia from Cappadocia. On one view, the measure had been taken before the Emperor left Rome.³⁰ Better, and indeed safer, when Armenia was annexed, when Catilius Severus (suff. 110) emerges as legate governing Cappadocia, Armenia Maior, Armenia Minor (ILS 1041).

Ignotus may be the first governor of separated Galatia, preceding the polyonymous Gallus of ILS 1038.³¹ If not, and perhaps preferable, A. Larcus Macedo (suff.? 123), whom numerous milestones attest.³²

In favour of Larcus Macedo intervenes a small fact. In the year 120 a census was held - at least by Terentius Gentianus in the province Macedonia. The mandate of *Ignotus* is defined as *lleg. Aug. pro pr. provinc. Galat. Phryg. / Pisid. Lycaon. Paphlag., item ad census Paphlag.*

(5) Sex. Julius Severus (suff. 127). ILS 1056 (Burnum). The inscription, which records the entire career, registers him as a *quindecimvir* between the minor magistracy and the military tribunate. This was accepted in PIR² J 576, as likewise in a catalogue of the sacerdotal colleagues of Cornelius Tacitus.³³ Redress is urgent. The fragment from Aequum (the *patria* of Severus) had been overlooked. While omitting the minor magistracy, it takes him from tribune in XIV Gemina onwards, to break off with legate of the same legion (AE 1950, 45).

The subsequent renown of Julius Severus (described by the historian Dio as Hadrian's best general) may have insinuated a prepossession in favour of the early priesthood. It lacks warrant. Severus was perhaps the first senator in his family. The fact that his nomenclature carries for prefix *Cn. Minicius Faustinus* (reflecting the homonymous *suffecti* of 91 and 117) lends little help.³⁴

³⁰ R.K. Sherk, ANRW II 7, 1980, 1031ff.

³¹ W. Eck, Chiron 12, 1982, 357 n. 365.

³² PIR² L 98, where is cited J. Morris advocating Macedo.

³³ Tacitus, 1958, 664.

³⁴ The provenance of these Minicii has not been ascertained.

For his priesthood, Severus may not have had to wait until the consulate. Decisive promotion came in a propitious season. In the year 119 Hadrian terminated the anomalous command of the knight Marcius Turbo (Dacia and Pannonia Inferior). He put Severus (legate of XIV Gemina at Carnuntum) in charge of Dacia Superior - which he was to hold until 126, perhaps until 127.

Early in 133 Hadrian brought Severus from Britain to deal with the Jewish rebellion. Earning *ornamenta triumphalia* and governor of Judaea he passed thence to Syria.³⁵ He died there almost at once, so it has been surmised.³⁶

(6) Ti. Claudius Quartinus (suff. 130). CIL XIII 1802 (Lugdunum). An equestrian tribune in III Cyrenaica, Quartinus was adlected by Trajan *in splendissimum ordinem*. In other words, given the *latus clavus*; and he entered the Senate as *quaestor urbanus*. The next line of the inscription was supplemented to begin with *[VIIvir. epul]oni*.³⁷ A standard work accepted the reading and proceeded to insert *VIIvir epulonum* after the name of Quartinus on his Ostian inscription (CIL XIV 4473).³⁸

One of the superior priesthoods for a promoted equestrian, that was not likely to arrive much before his consulship. Hence a misplacement to be assumed, as patently in the case of Sex. Julius Severus (cf. above).

There was more to be said. Groag conceived doubts, and he wondered about *[curi]oni* (PIR² C 990). And indeed, as has recently been pointed out, the supplement was too long for the gap. It must be rejected.³⁹

³⁵ By unusual inadvertence Syria was omitted from PIR² J 576.

³⁶ As conjectured in HSCP 86, 1982, 204 = Roman Papers IV, 1988, 44. His decease accounts for the anomalous appointment (? 136) of Bruttius Praesens (suff. ? 118).

³⁷ Thus Renier. The inscription is no longer extant.

³⁸ G. Alföldy, *Fasti Hispanienses*, 1969, 79.

³⁹ L. Schumacher, *Prosopographische Untersuchungen*, 1973, 135.

Let it be added that in confirmation of Groag's idea a perfect parallel was to hand. A gravestone at Narbo revealed Aemilius Arcanus, who after being tribune in three legions (the third in Britain) received the *latus clavus* from Hadrian. Entering the Senate as *quaestor urbanus*, he passed away when praetor-elect. Before his quaestorship Arcanus acquired the modest priesthood of a *curio*.⁴⁰

A reason for the promotion of Claudius Quartinus might be sought in his tribunate in III Cyrenaica, the legion which had the main part in the occupation of Arabia (105/6). Even if that notion be played down, his career was far from rapid. After the praetorship, Quartinus was legate to a proconsul of Asia, then *iuridicus* in Tarraconensis, attested in 117, and also in 119 (CIL II 2959: Pompaelo).

At the time of friction with the Parthians in 123, Quartinus held a military command: the legions II Traiana and III Cyrenaica brigaded together. But he did not attain to the consulate until seven years elapsed, coming from the governorship of Lugdunensis, as Groag divined and as an inscription now confirms (AE 1976, 427). Quartinus went on to Germania Superior, attested in 134 (CIL XVI 80). Thence to Britain, as a valuable and valid conjecture maintains.⁴¹ That is, the predecessor of Lollius Urbicus.

His tribe, the *Palatina*, betrays modest origins. Perhaps descendant of an imperial freedman; and Puteoli yields a homonym, a *duovir* (ILS 5919).

(7) p. Cassius Dexter (suff. ? 151). ILS 1050 (Hierapolis Castabala), cf. PIR² C 490. Between military tribunate and quaestorship occurs *VIIvir epulon., sodalis [---]*. The position of the two priesthoods is

⁴⁰ Appropriate in fact for equestrian status, cf. ILS 1451 (Sex. Caecilius Crescens Volusianus).

⁴¹ A.R. Birley, *The Fasti of Roman Britain*, 1981, 116, adducing the fragments IRB 1977 f.

clearly incorrect.⁴²

If Dexter was a *sodalis Titius* (the most likely), that honour could come at an early stage. After the praetorship, being legionary legate and governor of Cilicia, he stood in prospect of a consulship. In fact, already designate, as the Greek verses imply which his medical man appended, praying for a safe voyage to Italy.

The superior priesthood would be an appropriate distinction, either now or a little earlier. His wife, Annia Rufina, honoured by the city of Canusium, carries the label *P. Cassi Dextri, VIIvir. epulonum* (CIL IX 330).⁴³ That was not his own *patria* since he had *Claudia* for tribe. To Dexter's nomenclature belongs the addition *Augustanus Alpinus Bellicius Sollers*, indicating a link to the polyonymous Bellicius Sollers of Verona (PIR² B 103).⁴⁴

Dexter, the son (it is assumed) of P. Cassius Secundus, consul suffect in 138, held the quaestorship in the same year.⁴⁵ That touches his consular date. Perhaps 151.⁴⁶ The short interval in a successful career of this type, well attested in the time of Trajan, becomes infrequent under Hadrian and Pius.⁴⁷ No room avails on the Fasti after 151 until 155.⁴⁸

(8) M. Fabius Magnus Valerianus (suff.? 183). ILS 1138 (Clusium). After service as tribune in XI Claudia (in Moesia Inferior) and before

⁴² Schumacher however accepts the early position of *septemvir* (o.c. 121, cf. 259).

⁴³ Hence, one presumes, set up before his consulship.

⁴⁴ G. Alföldy, *Epigrafia e ordine senatorio* II, 1982, 318. Three towns in Venetia are enrolled in *Claudia*.

⁴⁵ CIL VIII 23246.

⁴⁶ G. Alföldy, *Konsulat und Senatorenstand unter den Antoninen*, 1977, 155 (cf., further on Dexter, 160).

⁴⁷ For Hadrian's policy, which put emphasis on the *suus annus*, see *Athenaeum* 62, 1984, 539 f. = *Roman Papers* IV, 1988, 318 f.

⁴⁸ Degrassi opted for c. 155.

the quaestorship stands *XVvir s. f.* The order of posts is not questioned in PIR² F 43, and it should perhaps be accepted.⁴⁹ Excellence in Danubian warfare or gaps caused by the plague may explain the honour - and Fabius had social prestige, with for ancestor Q. Fabius Barbarus Valerius Magnus Iulianus (suff. 99).⁵⁰

Fabius went on to command I Italica (in Moesia Inferior) and survived to participate in the Ludi Saeculares of 204.

(9) L. Annius Ravus (suff. 186). ILS 1121 (Rome). After *triumvir monetalis*, he is *salii Palatinus* and *pontifex*, next quaestor to the Emperor Commodus (? 181).

The name of this young patrician occurs on the document of the year 170 which registers changes in the *salii Palatini*: departures and their replacements (CIL VI 1978 = ILS 5024). One left when elected consul, five on becoming *flamines*. That is, testimony to the ravages caused by the worst year of the great plague. To the sixth entrant is subjoined *loco L. Anni Ravi exaugurati*.

For the departure of Ravus, no reason is added. Speculation is vain and superfluous.⁵¹ The fact suffices, *pontifex* antecedent to the quaestorship. Compare another youthful *pontifex* (no. 10).

His tribe is *Arnensis*, his cognomen unique apart from *L. Annius Ravus*, in the nomenclature of a C. Caerellius (ILS 1160), quaestor under Caracalla (PIR² C 157).

(10) M. Nummius Umbrius Albinus (cos. 206). ILS 1149 (Brixia). Before the quaestorship (which should fall c. 201), the inscription has *pontif./salio Palatino*. Albinus left the *salii* in 199 when joining

⁴⁹ Disallowed without comment by Schumacher, o.c. 91.

⁵⁰ Origin from Spain or Africa is surmised by A.R. Birley, *Septimius Severus*, 1971, 342 f.

⁵¹ Perhaps when co-opted *pontifex*, cf. the next item. Yet something peculiar subsists. For example, the long delay between *monetalis* (c. 170) and the quaestorship. See further the long note of Schumacher (o.c. 287 n. 308).

the *pontifices* (CIL VI 1980, cf. 1982). For his family and extraction see PIR² N 228: by birth an Umbrius with the tribe *Galeria*, from Compsa.⁵² The Nummii baffle.

(11) Sex. Caecilius Sex. f. Aemilianus. CIL VIII 25367 (near Thibiuca); ILAfr. 418 (Thibiuca). The first inscription takes Aemilianus as far as the praetorship, the second to the tribunate. Both offer *septemvir epulonum* before the quaestorship. The order of posts was accepted by Groag (PIR² C 17). He suggested possible identity with Caecilius Aemilianus, a proconsul of Baetica put to death by Caracalla (C 16).

Praenomina sometimes reveal regional habits. Of some five hundred Caecilii on African inscriptions, only four offer *Sextus*. A nexus of them emerges in the vicinity of Thibiuca. Thus, *patronus* of Thurbubo Minus, Sex. Caecilius Q. f. Crescens Volusianus, who had been secretary *ab epistulis* to Pius and Marcus (ILS 1451). A descendant was a *consularis* (ILTun. 1162), namely Sex. Caecilius Volusianus (C 87).

One is tempted to add the jurist Sex. Caecilius Africanus (C 18) who earned high praise from Gellius for *scientia* and for *auctoritas*. The Digest cites him several times as a *discipulus* of Salvius Julianus (cos. 148). Finally, African jurists (not that Julianus was one of them) brings up the unattested provenance of L. Volusius Maecianus.⁵⁴ Coming from the prefecture of Egypt, he entered the Senate early in the reign of Marcus and became consul - or at least *cos. desig.* (AE 1955, 179: Ostia).⁵⁵

The early priesthood of Aemilianus gains support if he could bene-

⁵² Beneventum, of which city he was *patronus*, is proposed by W. Eck, RE Suppl. XIV, 289.

⁵³ And not impugned by Schumacher, o.c. 125.

⁵⁴ For Salvius Julianus (ILS 8973: Pupput) Africa is generally assumed. Thus W. Kunkel, *Herkunft und soziale Stellung der römischen Juristen*, 1952, 157 ff.; G. Alföldy, *Konsulat etc.*, 1977, 313. For strong reasons against, T.D. Barnes, *Bonner HAC 1968/1969 (1970)*, 45 ff.

⁵⁵ For Volusius Maecianus, Africa was suggested in ZSS 97, 1980, 83 = Roman Papers III, 1984, 1377.

fit from influential connections with government officials; and he may belong a generation anterior to the proconsul of Baetica.⁵⁶

* * *

X. Epilogue. Inspection of the priesthoods acquired by eleven senators, a miscellaneous congregation, furnishes various instruction about political and social life. Further aspects should not forfeit attention. The catalogue which registered holders of the *quattuor amplissima* from 96 to 235 has encouraged an alert critic to bring up a relevant phenomenon, namely persons of consequence who got no further than some minor sacerdotal office.⁵⁷

Thus notably Lollius Urbicus, who, legate of a legion and legate under Hadrian in the Jewish War, proceeded to a rapid consulship (? 136) and the charge of Germania Inferior (ILS 1065). Still only a *fetialis*. Likewise Antistius Adventus, consul after merit shown in the Parthian War of L. Verus, with consular employments to follow (ILS 8977). And a culminating surprise and perplexity, Marius Maximus: *cos., / sacerdoti fetiali* (ILS 2935). Nothing better when he had become consul for the second time in the year 223 (AE 1955, 188: Lanuvium). Other instances can be mustered.⁵⁸

A cognate phenomenon beckons suitably: no priesthood of any kind. Allowance will be made for omissions along with other mistakes in inscriptions.⁵⁹ Death forestalled some legitimate aspirations. Thus Antistius Rusticus (suff. 90), succumbing in 93 or 94 when governor of Cappadocia-Galatia (AE 1925, 126, cf. Martial IX 30).

⁵⁶ A later dating however is assumed by M. Corbier, *Epigraphia e ordine senatorio* II, 1982, 735. The only Sex. Caecilii in PIR² are those noted here. Add now to the peculiar rubric Sex. Caecilius Maximus, *arvalis* c. 150 (AE 1947, 59): perhaps consul in 153.

⁵⁷ A.R. Birley, *JRS* 56, 1976, 238: in review of L. Schumacher.

⁵⁸ Adduced in response by Schumacher, *ANRW* II 16.1, 1978, 794.

⁵⁹ Thus *fetialis* for Catilius Severus at Thysdrus (ILAfr. 43), omitted at Antium (ILS 1041).

Nevertheless, a pair of noteworthy specimens is to hand.

(1) L. Neratius Priscus (suff. 87). ILS 1034 (Saepinum, cf. 1033): set up in or after the year 105. Subjoined on the stone is his homonymous son, the jurist (suff. 97).⁶⁰ Neither is endowed with a full *cursus*. The rendering is abridged and highly selective. The son was *septemvir epulorum*, but the parent avows no priesthood. Most peculiar.⁶¹ The parent had been governor of Pannonia (? from 92 to 95) - and the years of pestilence should have helped with vacancies in the four sacerdotal colleges.⁶²

(2) C. Julius Cornutus Tertullus (suff. 100). ILS 1024 (territory of Praeneste): set up in or after 117. After long years devoid of promise, Tertullus benefited from certain transactions in 97 and became consul in 100, colleague to Pliny, his friend and ally. He was now in his middle fifties. If a priesthood had accrued before the winter of 109/10 (when the correspondence was published), it would have found acclaim, as had the charge of the Via Aemilia in 104.

Further, Trajan employed him to conduct the census in Aquitania (c. 110), and in 112 he succeeded Pliny in the governorship of Bithynia, exacting task. In 117 he ended as proconsul in Africa.

This citizen of Perge in Pamphylia, product of the old Italian diaspora, had failed (so it appears) to endear himself to the managers of patronage and merchants of honours; and Trajan may have set a higher value on his competence than on his personality.

The relations between the government and the upper order were subtle and discreet, of necessity permeated with ambiguities. On the surface, priesthoods, next to the consulate, reside in the gift of Caesar. Seneca declared it when rebuking the pretensions of the

⁶⁰ PIR² N 59 f. After long and various uncertainties (to which the present writer contributed) clarity dawned, thanks largely to G. Camodeca.

⁶¹ His brother Neratius Pansa (suff. c. 75) was a *quindecimvir* (AE 1968, 145).

⁶² Between 89 and 93, cf. Tacitus, 1958, 69; Some Arval Brethren, 1980, 20 ff.

ambitious senator, avid and insatiable: *dedit duodecim fasces: sed non fecit ordinarium consulem. a me numerari voluit annum: sed deest mihi ad sacerdotium. cooptatus in collegium sum: sed cur in unum?* (De ira III 31.2).

By paradox that classic definition will lead on to a negatory thesis of general validity. Certain limitations inhibit the freedom of an autocrat in dispensing honours. He is not only the head of the government but the head of society. He cannot refuse a consulship to ancestry, however deleterious be the person, or even an object of dislike.⁶³

As concerns priesthoods, no ruler in his senses would be tempted to overstrain his prerogative by packing the sacerdotal colleges with his own blatant adherents. Admission was dominated by members grown old in guile, who, responsive to the prejudices of the coterie, would hesitate to promote the co-optation of the dull and uncongenial. Of such was the *quindecimvir* Fabricius Veiento, *cos. ter.* That college took in a superior selection, as several names convey.⁶⁴ Cornelius Tacitus was already one of this company when praetor in 88. Legitimate curiosity will ask about recent performances of the young orator, and about the quality of his sponsors.

And a final paradox. In a society possessed by the appetite for honours or mere titles, a few senators might perhaps be found whose sober judgement disdained to compete in intrigue or viewed with distaste the fancy costumes and solemnities of archaic pageantry.

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⁶³ None will fancy that Ti. Caesar cherished Domitius Ahenobarbus or Fabius Persicus.

⁶⁴ Tacitus, 1958, 66; 644. To the list add now Neratius Pansa (AE 1968, 145) and the Ignotus governor of Aquitania under Trajan (AE 1963, 94: Thugga). While Julius Severus goes out, cf. above.